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THE SKETCH
JULY 15, 1953

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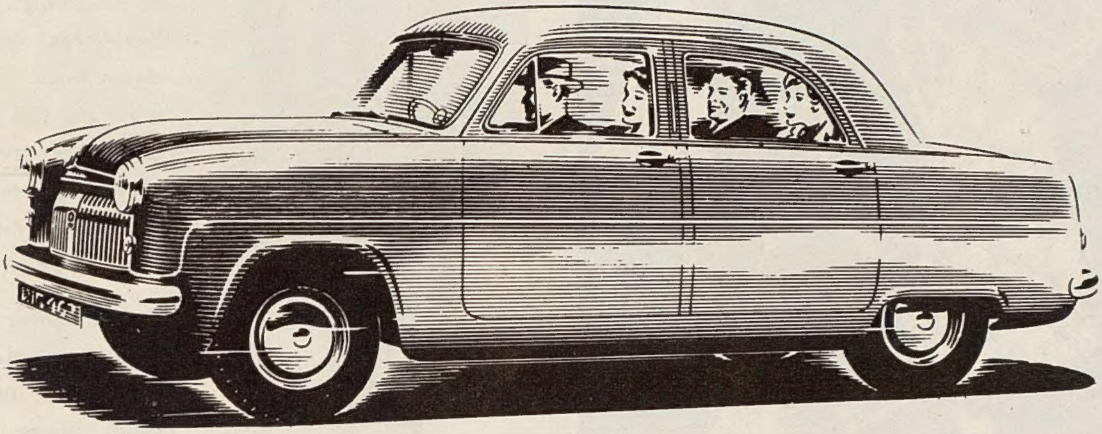

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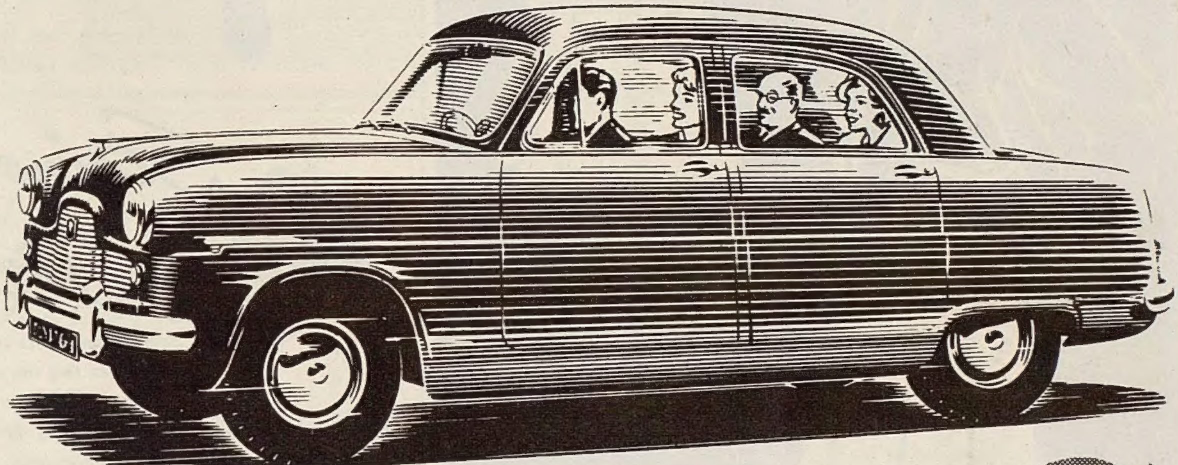

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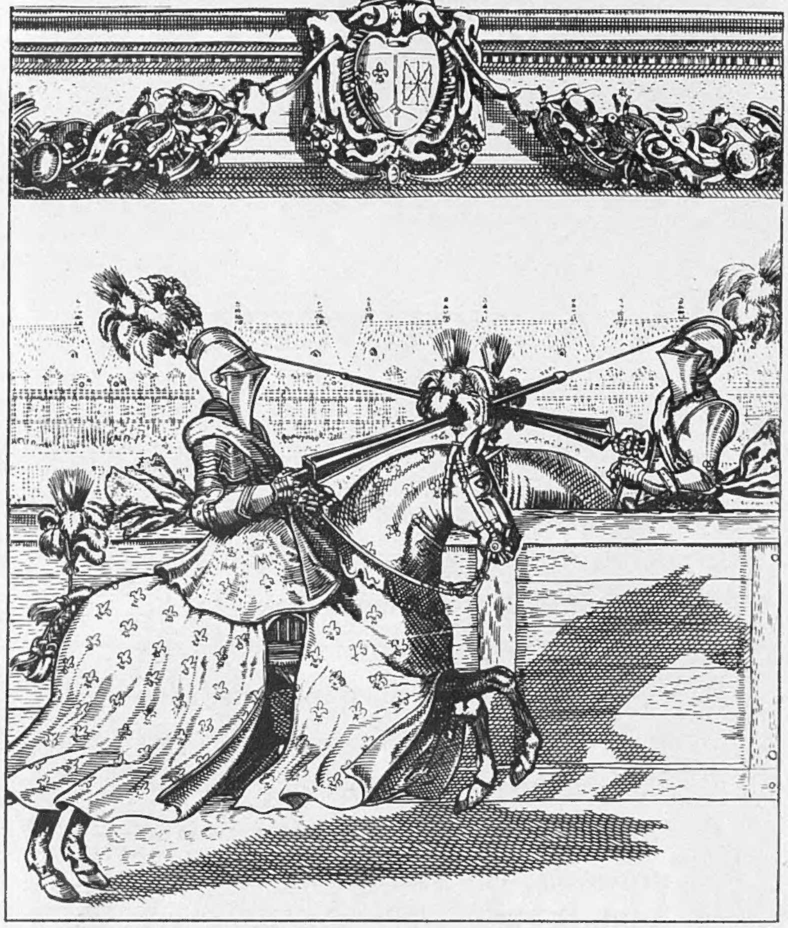

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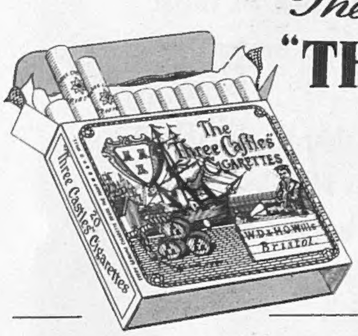

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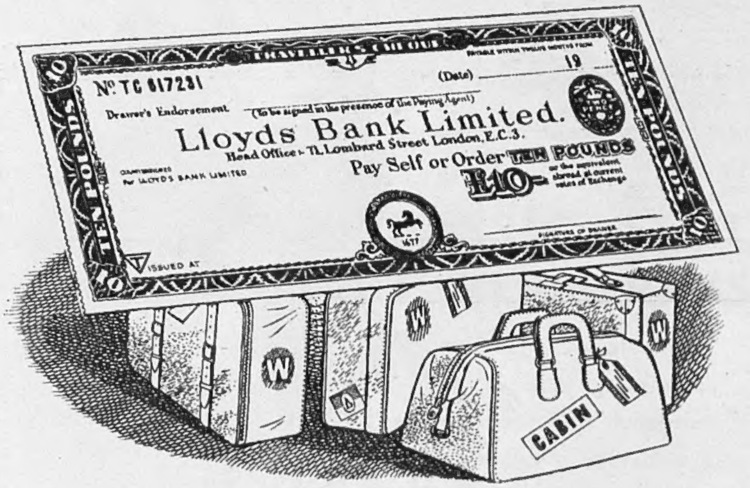

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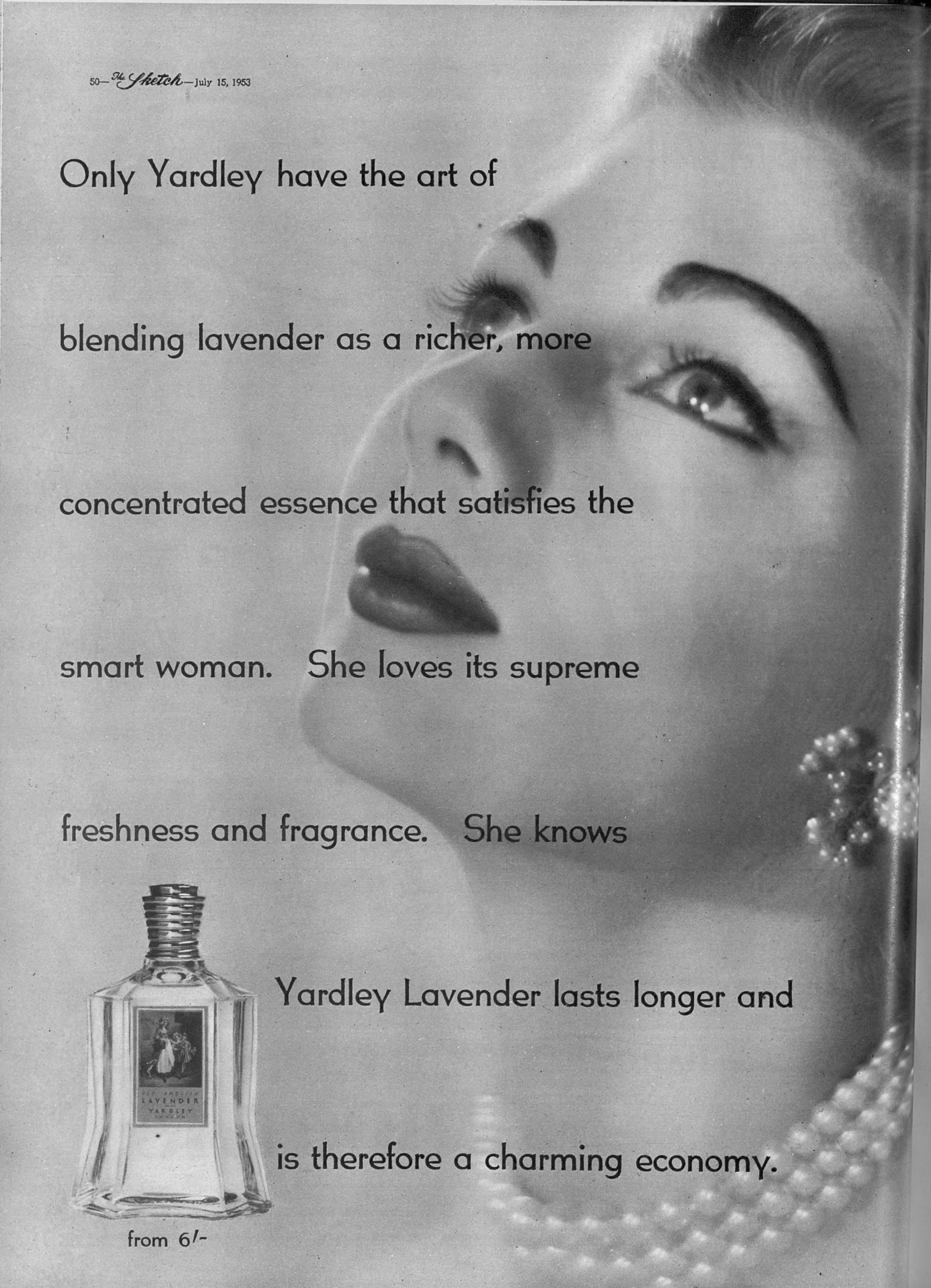
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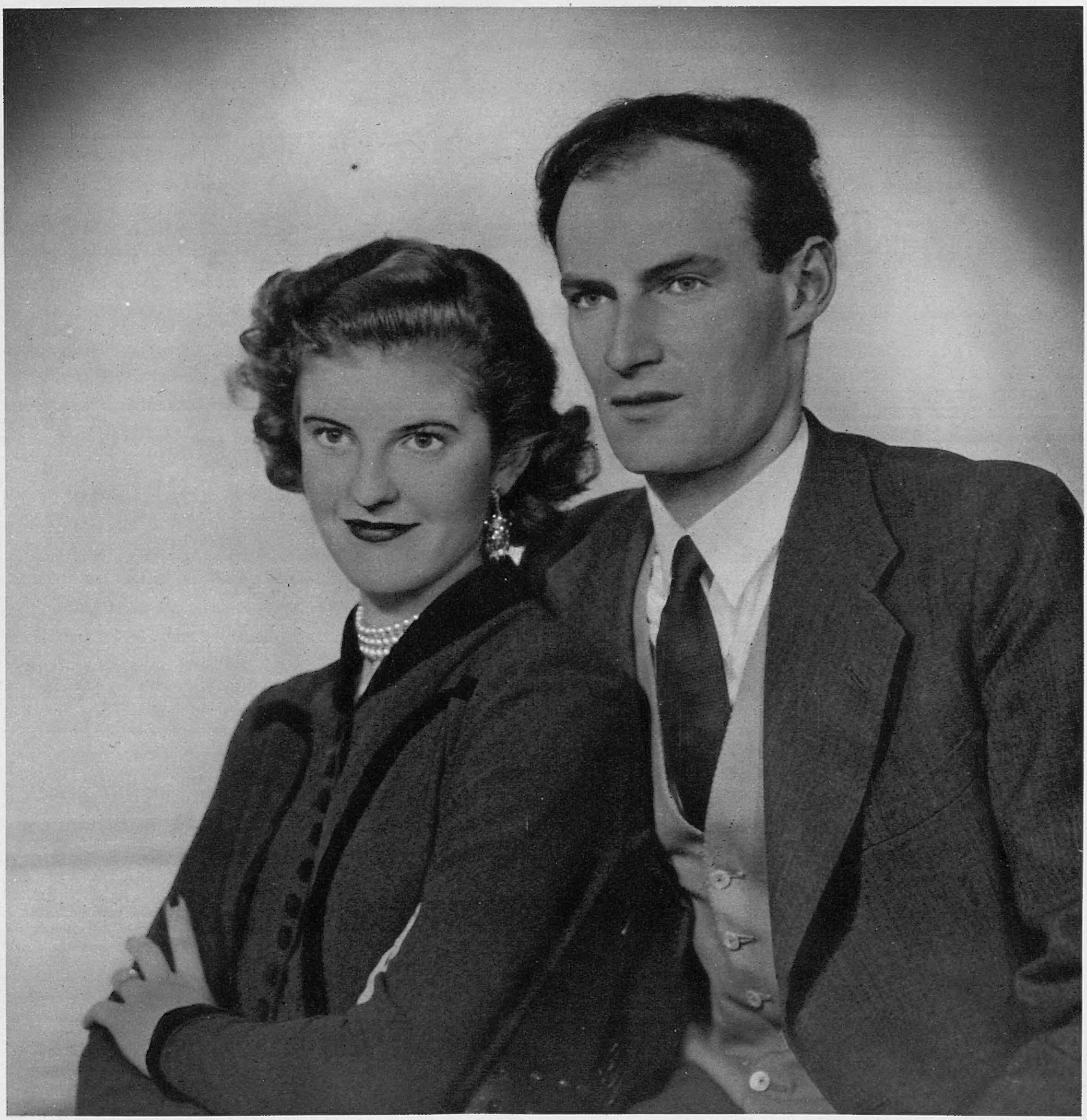
The Sketch

WEDNESDAY, JULY 15, 1953



Photographed by Lenare.

RECENTLY ENGAGED

A young couple who announced their engagement on June 27th and plan to marry in early December are the Hon. Ian Balfour, son of Lord Balfour of Inchrye and of Diana, Lady Balfour of Inchrye, and Miss Maria Bernard, daughter of Mr. and the Hon. Mrs. Morogh Bernard, of The Old Glebe House, Shankill, County Dublin. Mr. Ian Balfour, who is twenty-eight, served with the Royal Navy from 1942 to 1945.

VICTORIAN FAMILY À LA MODE—though whether the traditional photographer's "birdie" scared the life out of them we shall never know. The group, however, is rather more modern, for it comes from *The Two Bouquets* which has recently transferred to the Piccadilly Theatre. *L. to r.*: Sonia Williams as Laura Rivers, Rose Hill as Mrs. Gill, Hugh Paddick as Edward Gill, Derek Oldham as Mr. Gill and Sara Gregory as Kate Gill.

Our Motley Notes

By Toby O'Brien

THE strain of modern statesmanship, plus the additional burdens of the Coronation, could not have been better illustrated than by the fact that they have succeeded in getting even Sir Winston down—if only temporarily. I say "temporarily" advisedly, as it would be a very rash heir-apparent who started trying on that crown! The great old man is perfectly capable of returning in a few weeks' time as full of disconcertingly youthful zest as ever. Like his lieutenant, Anthony Eden, whose recovery looks like being complete, he has vast reserves of physical and nervous energy on which to draw. In the case of Anthony, my tip is that he will come back in the autumn in better fettle than he has been for years. He has been consistently overworking for a long time, and the enforced mental rest due to his operations may prove to have been a blessing in disguise.

In choosing Lord Salisbury to take over the Foreign Office—the day-to-day affairs of which have been so ably run by the devoted Mr. Selwyn Lloyd—Sir Winston has made a choice which should add much to Anthony Eden's equanimity. Not only have the two younger men been friends all their lives, but they have been close colleagues for a large part of their political careers. Lord Salisbury was Anthony's faithful henchman at the Foreign Office in the pre-war years and knows the mind of the Foreign Secretary on international affairs as probably nobody else does.

Douglas Jerrold in his excellent autobiography describes a meeting of the Chatham Club at Oxford before World War I. Lord Salisbury (then Lord Cranborne) "passed me a note. It read 'where is Bohemia?' I knew at once he was destined for the Foreign Office." I wonder whether the Chatham still flourishes? This pleasant and ancient club was, I suppose, the repository of Oxford High Toryism, as the Canning was of that creed's more moderate expression, and the Durham, of Liberalism.

RECENTLY, I recorded in this column my shattering experience at a public dinner when an atomic scientist lectured us, complete with blackboard, for about two-and-a-half hours, and drew attention to this new and terrifying manifestation in London's post-prandial life. I have now, however, discovered the perfect answer to the menace of over-long after-dinner speeches. Recently Mr. Norman Ditchburn, a well-known North of England industrialist, gave a party to draw attention to his music-maker, an all-British variant of the American juke-box, which is becoming respectably popular in this country.

Instead of the usual speech on such occasions, he thanked his guests for coming in one sentence, and then said: "I do not propose to make a speech, but I should like you to hear my views—in the happy knowledge that they cannot possibly last more than three minutes." With that he put a coin in his machine from which a three-minute recording emerged.

What a wonderful idea! When one goes to a public dinner it is with a sinking heart that one contemplates the toast list—six names—and old Lord So-and-So is always good (or bad) for forty minutes. Knowing the form of some of the other speakers, one

mentally assesses the evening at 1 hour and 40 minutes of inferior oratory. How splendid if one could be sure that all the speeches had been recorded in advance and could rapidly work out that six lots of three-minutes meant a total of eighteen minutes—or with the toastmaster's introductions—twenty minutes in all.

I recommend this admirable new idea to all organisers of public dinners. Incidentally, it is one which should commend itself to all but the most resolute of after-dinner speakers. Instead of miserably toying with their food and fiddling with their notes, they could have got the whole thing over a fortnight before in the quiet of a recording studio, and settled down to enjoy their own brief oratory and their cigars.

Another excellent short speech made recently was that of the Spanish Ambassador, the Duke of Primo de Rivera, when at the Spanish Tourist Office he recommended Cedric Salter's new book on Spain as being one of the most "witty, provocative and knowledgeable." books on Spain he had yet read. Cedric now lives in Madrid, and anybody who has had the good luck to be guided by him (as I have done) will have had a pre-taste of his book's quality and will agree with the Ambassador.

The ridiculous pother over the bathing-dress regulations which has been stirred up by not wholly disinterested parties is, as the Ambassador pointed out, admirably dealt with in the book, where Cedric says: "Rules and regulations do exist which, if enforced, would oblige you to take your swim looking as though you were arrayed to celebrate a gala night in Galashiels, *circa* 1897. Fortunately, these rules are never fully enforced, and in most places they are totally ignored. . . . In such places as the Costa Brava and Majorca you can bathe in exactly what you would wear at the seaside at home."

One story which he does not tell in the book, but which I always think admirably illustrates the Spanish character, relates to when, a year or two ago, he had a house at Sitges, south of Barcelona. His house was on the beach, separated from it only by the sea-front road. One very hot summer day he left his deck-chairs some hundred yards away at lunch-time. It occurred to him that he would be perhaps wise to fetch them—not because of the Spaniards, who are impeccably honest, but because of various visitors of other nationalities. He approached a gentleman who was lounging in the shade of a wall, and asked him if he would care to earn 5 pesetas by collecting his chairs for him. (Five pesetas, though 10d. in our money, represented more than this gentleman's average day's subsistence, *i.e.*, one-and-a-half pesetas for bread, one-and-a-half pesetas for sardines, and one-and-a-half pesetas for a litre of almost black red wine.) The Catalan considered for a moment, and then said: "Before I make a decision, I want your honour to know how very much I appreciate the kindliness of your thought, which leads you to wish to place five pesetas in my way. But having said that—on the whole—no. You see, I have got five pesetas."

BUSHY: by Hargrave

"CAN'T YOU RING, YOU CLOT!"

I AM a vodka fan—a habit I acquired in pre-war days in Berlin—and therefore greatly enjoyed a recent party where we drank Vodka Smirnoff, and later, champagne out of beer mugs until a late hour. It is curious that vodka, in pre-war days, had a definite geographical boundary. In Russia, Poland and East Germany (as far west as Berlin) it was always extremely popular. Indeed, really the only aperitif in pre-war days in Berlin was iced vodka, which, of course, must be put down in one, or at the most, two gulps. But it never enjoyed much popularity further west. The colourless vodka which we know in the West is only one of a number of variants. I remember somebody telling me in Warsaw that there were over 200 types of Polish vodka, ranging from the colourless to deep purple, with every other colour in between.

The secret of vodka drinking is, of course, (*a*) putting it down in one, (*b*) having plenty of *hors d'œuvres* or other snacks with it to line the tummy. I remember, during the war, three high Polish officers I met in Edinburgh, who could have put anyone under the table on vodka and under these conditions, but who were defeated by diluted Scotch whisky on empty stomachs.

The most notable feat of vodka drinking of which I have ever heard was told me by Sir Frank Savory, who for so many years was British Consul-General in Warsaw. In pre-1914 days he was in a Russian train chugging slowly across what was then, and is again now, Russian Poland. For verst after interminable verst, the tedium of the journey was lightened for him by the only other occupant of the compartment, a Russian officer, who talked with animation about night clubs and women—or, alternatively, women and night clubs. At one station they got out to stretch their legs, and Sir Frank accepted a drink from the Russian officer from the drinks trolley which was then a feature of every Russian station. At the next station he offered his Russian companion a drink in return. Bowing, the Russian took a full bottle of vodka, and before the astonished eyes of Sir Frank, tipped the whole lot down his throat. He bowed again, and replaced the bottle on the trolley. They then got back into their compartment, where the officer discoursed brightly on the twin subjects of—women and night clubs. After some twenty minutes he begged Sir Frank's pardon, and said that he felt a little sleepy. Half-an-hour later he woke up as if nothing had happened, and continued to talk, curiously enough, about night clubs and women!

It was pleasant to meet at that vodka party an old friend in Baroness Budberg. Moura, it will be recalled, figures largely in Sir Robert Bruce-Lockhart's excellent books dealing with Russia during and immediately after the Revolution. I am not one who is naturally attracted by the type of woman who fancies herself in the rôle of keeping a *salon*. Some of the most tiresome females of my acquaintance have seen themselves in that light, including the lady who solemnly wrote to Beachcomber to complain that she was the original of his character "Mrs. Wretch."

Between the wars, however, Moura Budberg presided over a salon where one could be sure of meeting some of the most amusing people in London—and even if they were not amusing, like the late H. G. Wells, you were sure of stimulating exasperation. Even during the war and bombings she kept up the habit. I shall always recall Peter Ustinov, who had just returned from Algiers, giving an account in half-a-dozen languages of the squabbles of the warring nationalities who went to make up the Allied cause in those difficult days. Much as I admire Peter's virtuosity on the stage, he has never to my mind come anywhere near that brilliant private performance. I shall always be grateful to Moura Budberg for it—and always be sorry that I had no portable wire recorder with me to preserve it for posterity.

FORMAL GROUP : The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh on the steps of Government House with *left*, Lady Brookeborough and Lord Brookeborough, Prime Minister of Northern Ireland, and, *right*, Lady Wakehurst and Lord Wakehurst, the Governor, after the reception at Hillsborough.

The Royal

THE THREE-DAY STATE VISIT TO NORTHERN IRELAND

The heart-warming welcome given to the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh on their State visit to Northern Ireland from July 1st to 3rd was as affectionate and loyal as any they had received in their tour of Britain since the Coronation. The entire visit was blessed with fine weather, and people flocked to see the Royal couple from villages and hamlets, lining the streets of the towns they visited, or gathering at wayside stations through which the Royal train was due to pass. One of the

INFORMAL GROUP : At Balmoral, Belfast, the Queen, seen here talking with disabled ex-Servicemen who were on parade, took the salute at the march-past of ex-Service organisations.

SERENADE : The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh being serenaded by the "drums of the Orangemen" on the steps of Government House, Hillsborough, by Garfield Matchett and Daniel Crooks.

HISTORICAL : Standing before a statue of Queen Victoria inside the Guildhall at Londonderry with the Mayor of Londonderry, Alderman Samuel Orr, whom she subsequently knighted, the Queen chats with some of the guests.

Programme

most interesting incidents of the three-day tour was the thundering welcome in traditional style accorded the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh on the night of their arrival in Northern Ireland by the famous "drums of the Orangemen." The sound of the huge drums being beaten with canes by drummers working in relays outside Government House, Hillsborough, where the Governor and Lady Wakehurst were giving a State dinner, could be heard for miles around the quiet Antrim countryside. Another moving incident occurred when 25,000 schoolchildren and members of youth organisations massed in the Balmoral (Belfast) showgrounds on July 2nd sang *When Irish Eyes Are Smiling* to the Queen, as she stood on a dais in front of the grandstand. When the Royal couple left by air for London the farewell cheers of the Londonderry crowds who lined the ancient city walls near the Guildhall were still ringing in their ears—a fitting finale to a very happy visit.

UNREHEARSED: The Queen and Lord Wakehurst (*right*) joined in the general amusement when three-year-old Caragh Mary Coote hesitated over her next move after presenting a bouquet to the Queen at Aldergrove R.A.F. station.

REHEARSED: On the last day of her State visit, the Queen inspected a guard of the Irish Guards at Stormont, where, at the Parliament Buildings, her Majesty received loyal addresses from her subjects. In bright sunshine, the rolling countryside formed a fine background to the impressive scene as the Queen, accompanied by the Duke of Edinburgh, took the salute of her guard.

Lady Rosemary Spencer-Churchill and Mr. Charles Robert Muir were married at Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford, on Friday, June 26th.

Lady Rosemary Spencer-Churchill married Mr. C. R. Muir

The bride and bridegroom leaving the cathedral after th[e]
maids in white organdie dresses : Mimi and Serena Russel[l]
More O'Ferrall and Jane Gregory Hood, and by five page[s]
Jeremy Sykes, and Richard

Top and below: Some of the bride's young attendants.

...emony. The bride was attended by seven young brides- ...y Sarah Coke, the Hon. Victoria Mills, Jane Astor, Susan ...white suits: Nicholas Soames, Michael Waterhouse, ... James Hambro.

The Duchess of Marlborough, mother of the bride, leaves the church with other guests, after the ceremony.

Princess Margaret was among the guests at the wedding, and was wearing a flower-patterned dress of pale pink and a coolie-style white straw hat.

Lady Rosemary Spencer-Churchill, the youngest daughter of the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough, who was one of the Queen's Maids of Honour at the Coronation, was married to Mr. Charles Robert Muir at Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford, on June 26. Lady Rosemary's wedding dress was in white-embroidered organdie with long sleeves and a full skirt, and the neckline, cut square, was edged with appliqué flowers from the embroidery. Her bouquet was of white gardenias formed in two cascades. Torrential rain fell as guests left the reception at Blenheim Palace, and many cars were forced to a standstill between Woodstock and Oxford, where 2 ins. of rain had flooded the road. Princess Margaret, who had attended the ceremony, escaped the thunderstorm as she left half-an-hour before it broke, but many of the 1000 guests must have been thankful for the special train which the Duke of Marlborough had chartered for their journey from Paddington to Oxford and back.

OUR BOOKSHELF

A FROST ON MY FROLIC. By Gwyn Thomas. (*Gollancz ; 12s. 6d.*)
MR. STIMPSON AND MR. GORSE. By Patrick Hamilton. (*Constable ; 12s. 6d.*)
THE MUSTARD SEED. By Vicki Baum. (*Michael Joseph ; 12s. 6d.*)
INVITATION TO AN EASTERN FEAST. By Austin Coates. (*Hutchinson ; 21s.*)

by *RUPERT CROFT-COOKE*

THE publishers of *A Frost On My Frolic*, by Gwyn Thomas, say that the author has been compared to "the following strange assortment: Rabelais, Runyon, Peacock, Joyce Cary, Christopher Fry, Chaucer, John Bunyon." The explanation for these orgies of wild comparison is a simple one—Mr. Thomas is an Original. He has his own way of saying a thing, his own gusty and garrulous sense of humour, his own gushing rhetoric and, above all, his own squinting eye for pathos. It is quite impossible as yet to assess the value of these or to begin to "place" this author, but it is exciting to find talent so odd and individual let loose with such abandon, and to race through scenes of slapstick farce or near-tragedy driven by a man with such confidence and flair.

There is no more "story" here than in as many pages of *Tristram Shandy*, but the events described begin in the spring of 1944 in Mynydd Coch, "which is as rough a place as you will find in this sector." The narrator is on his way to school with his friend Spencer, and is remembering the various fears which beset their mutual friend Wilfie. "His father must have been some kind of a shudder. He meets you with a distant shivering laugh that is uncanny on any ear which is new to Wilfie's family. He gets no peace, and if he starts analysing this business of his dreads, which run the best-stocked mental stall in Mynydd Coch, when I am anywhere near him, I get no sleep." They meet Ted Dolan, "late for the fourth time this week." Ted, says the narrator (and we agree with him), "is a very interesting element to watch."

Soon we know something of the two sects in Mynydd Coch, the Lookers, who "wait hourly for the Judgment and stand ready to skip out of the road and work out a case in the comfort of the ditch," and the Drummers, who were founded by "a very far-seeing young seer called Evan Jacobs. Sitting disgruntled on the mountainside one night he saw a cloud formation which resembled, he thought, a hand cupped over an ear. This gives Evan the idea that God is deaf." We then follow these heroes through a number of bizarre, picturesque or wildly comic adventures among "the voters" of the town. I hope I may have given some suggestion of the savour of this rich and readable book. The talent in it is not to be ignored and may well prove to be genius.

A DISAPPOINTMENT for me began in Mr. Patrick Hamilton's last novel, *The West Pier*, and is increased by his sequel to it, *Mr. Stimpson and Mr. Gorse*. In this the author is laying it on with a trowel, driving home with tedious repetition the points of his intention to create an unpleasant criminal. He is never satisfied to let Ernest Ralph Gorse and the other characters speak for themselves, or to reveal them through their actions, but in statement after statement tells us what to expect of them. Up to page 20, in fact, the book consists almost entirely of such statements, about Colonels, about Mrs. Plumleigh-Bruce, about Ernest Ralph Gorse, and thereafter there are more, about Mr. Stimpson the estate agent, about Major Parry and his wife. The story develops along lines familiar to readers of *West Pier*, Gorse's determination to fleece Mrs. Plumleigh-Bruce of her money and the way in which he achieves it. It is a story of the saloon bar, of people in that wide stratum to whom public bars are spit and sawdust, but who cannot carry gentility to the point of avoiding public-houses altogether.

Their pretensions, vanities, jealousies, stereotyped ambitions and longings for a good time are displayed with some of the author's own gusto, and before the end of the book we know a great deal more than we did about this particular section of provincial society. But from a writer of Mr. Hamilton's calibre this is not enough, and his promise in the last lines of the book that Gorse will die painlessly and quickly, and not in his bed, presumably in a sequel, does not compensate for some of the rather clumsy workmanship to be found here.

Val Gielgud's new novel, *The High Jump* (Collins ; 12s. 6d.), a study of the people surrounding a man who jumps to suicide, breaks into a more serious field than his eight previous thrillers and two historical novels.

THERE is a thoroughness about *The Mustard Seed*, by Vicki Baum, an attention to detail in describing the conduct of certain psychopathic cases, which gives the book an almost frightening authenticity, but does not make it any less beguiling as a thoroughly readable story. Quoting a somewhat ambiguous sign in a Los Angeles hospital that "sooner or later mental illness touches one in every five families," the author brings into one such family an Italian faith-healer called Giano, who finds himself involved not only in the affairs of his hosts but floodlit by the hideous white lights of American publicity.

Perhaps the most interesting sections of the book are presented as case-histories: of Charles Atherton, a Negro boy suffering from idiopathic epilepsy; of Douglas B. Allingham, fifty-one, Nervous Exhaustion and Sexual Impotence; of Janet Eldridge, twenty-two, Mild Anxiety Neurosis, and so on. These are excellently presented, with the accuracy of a first-rate doctor's findings and the imaginativeness of good fiction. I found the whole book depressing but powerful.

A FIRST book by the composer's son, *Invitation to an Eastern Feast*, by Austin Coates, has much to recommend it and much that is irritating. Mr. Coates is justly proud of his familiarity with certain aspects of life in Asia, and of the knowledge which he has gained by personal experience. "I have simply lived in a number of well-known Asian cities, made a great many Asian friends, and eaten enormous quantities of peculiar food. During this time I have been in the service of the Crown, first under military orders and later in a more congenial civil capacity. But in my spare time the people I met and the places I visited have taken me into far wider fields than my routine duties could have done. Into that precious spare time I have packed some of the best hours I have ever spent, with Asia's artists and writers, statesmen and scientists, priests and teachers. On holidays I have travelled thousands of miles in every imaginable kind of conveyance, and dined and slept in every kind of surrounding from the frugal ashram of Mahatma Gandhi, where I stayed as a guest in 1945, to sumptuous Buddhist monasteries in Japan."

But he is apt to congratulate himself too often and too complacently on having crossed the threshold and penetrated into regions which, he seems to think, are almost unvisited by Europeans. He learned to sit in the Indian manner. "An Indian would sense a gulf of formality lying between himself and me until I, too, tucked my bare feet comfortably underneath me," to wear Indian clothes and to rejoice in being dubbed a "masquerader" by "the Jockey Club Circle," but he does love the East, observe many quaint and unexpected aspects of life there, and interpret them fondly and in clear language.

YOUR LIBRARY LIST

BOBBY LOCKE ON GOLF.
(*Country Life ; 25s.*)

LOOKING AT LONDON.
By Ronald Searle and Kaye Webb.
(*News Chronicle ; 5s.*)

INTO THIN AIR.
By Jack Iams. (*Gollancz ; 10s. 6d.*)
Good American detection.

CONQUEST : The Story of a Theatre Family.
By Frances Fleetwood. (*Allen ; 21s.*)
A fascinating chapter of stage history.

A SHORT HISTORY OF MUSIC.
By Alfred Einstein. (*Cassell ; 30s.*)
A new illustrated edition of this useful work.

ÜBER ALLES : GERMANY EXPLORED.
By George Mikes. With drawings by David Langdon.
(*Wingate ; 8s. 6d.*)
Too much text and too few drawings for my taste.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE CAMBRIDGE UNION, 1815-1939.
A number of distinguished men contribute memoires.

NO MORE MEADOWS.
By Monica Dickens. (*Michael Joseph ; 12s. 6d.*)
A comfy by-the-fire novel about an Anglo-American marriage which stumbles and goes on again.

ONE MAN'S MEAT.
By Ludovic Kennedy. (*Longmans ; 13s. 6d.*)
Chatty diary, full of personal opinions and experiences, kept by the author while doing a long period of research.

TATTERSALLS.
By Vincent Orchard. (*Hutchinson ; 30s.*)
Well-produced and illustrated, this chronicle of the Tattersall family, from the arrival in London of Richard Tattersall in 1745, is almost a history of the Turf.

Personality Parade—2

NINETTE DE VALOIS

Photographed for "The Sketch" by Jitendra Arya

Miss Ninette de Valois, created a D.B.E. in 1951, was born Edris Stannus in Ireland in 1898. She started her career as a dancer in pantomime at the Lyceum Theatre in 1914, appearing there annually until 1919. Thereafter, she danced with various companies in England, toured Europe with the Diaghileff Russian Ballet from 1923 to 1925, and often partnered Anton Dolin in London. In 1927, Miss de Valois was appointed director of the Ballet at the Abbey Theatre, Dublin. Then in 1931 she founded the Sadler's Wells Ballet and has been its director since then. She is an Hon. Doctor of Music, London University, and has written a book, *Invitation to the Ballet.* Under her direction, the Sadler's Wells Ballet Company has become the most important in Western Europe, and in September she will once again be taking them to America for what promises to be a very popular season.

PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST—Veronica Burleigh.

GYPSY DOING HER HAIR—Dame Laura Knight, D.B.E., R.A.

ON THE ALERT—Marguerite Frobisher, R.C.A.

HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN (first model for the obverse of the Korea Medal). By kind permission of the Deputy Master of the Royal Mint—Mrs. Mary Gillick, O.B.E.

"FOUR LITTLE NIGGER BOYS"—Marguerite Frobisher, R.C.A.

"EVEN THE SNOW DID NOT STOP US"—Kathleen M. Pearson, A.R.W.A.

THE SCHOOL GIRL—Hilda Kidman.

MRS. HALDANE-DUNCAN, WRITER AND POET
—The Baroness Ines Taxis.

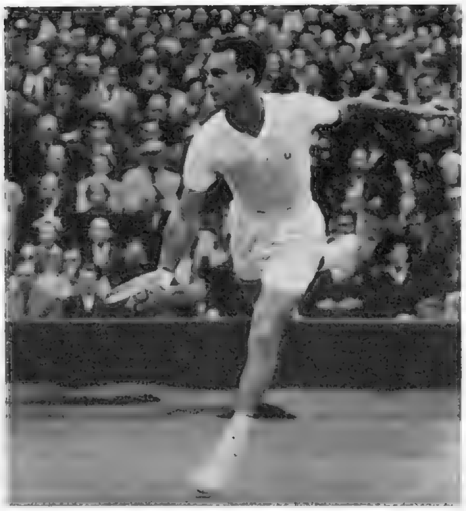
CECILIA—K. M. Scale.

SOCIETY OF WOMEN ARTISTS' 92nd Exhibition

Reproduced here are some of the many exciting works from the interesting exhibition by the Society of Women Artists, which was held at the Royal Institute Galleries in Piccadilly from June 15th to June 29th. This was the ninety-second exhibition of paintings, sculpture and crafts by the Society, which, founded in 1855, has some 140 members and associates, among whom are many notable figures. It is under the patronage of H.R.H. The Princess Royal and H.R.H. the Duchess of Kent. The President is Dame Laura Knight.

SEPTEMBER—Kathleen M. Pearson, A.R.W.A.

MAUREEN CONNOLLY
Ladies' Singles Champion.



VICTOR SEIXAS
Men's Singles Champion.

The Singles Champions lead the dancing at the L.T.A. Ball on July 4th.

WIMBLEDON IN RETROSPECT

by Louis T. Stanley

IT was not an outstanding Wimbledon and the fortnight was saved from near-mediocrity by two matches—the third-round Marathon between Jaroslav Drobny and Budge Patty of ninety-three games lasting four-and-a-quarter hours; and the final of the women's singles between Miss Maureen Connolly and Miss Doris Hart, which reached heights reminiscent of Lenglen at her best. Miss Connolly is a worthy champion and, looking at her tally of national titles, consisting of Wimbledon (two), United States (two), France (one) and Australia (one), it is astonishing that such mature success can come to a youngster of eighteen. Seixas won the men's singles in straight sets against Kurt Nielsen, the first unseeded player for twenty-three years to reach the final; but in company with other matches, little or no impression lingers of the details.

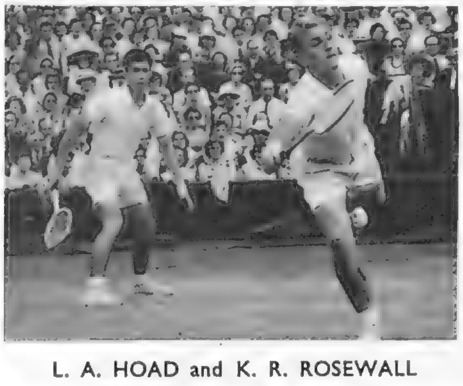
To indulge in one generalised criticism, our women players were pathetically feeble. On current form it is a waste of time and money to send a Wightman Cup team across the Atlantic in August, for the result is a foregone conclusion. The only consolation is that the result can be no worse than last time, when we lost 7—0 and the Americans registered their sixteenth consecutive victory. At one time there was little between the women players of the United States and Great Britain, and by 1930 the Wightman Cup tally showed four wins apiece, but since then our stock has slumped. At Wimbledon our girls showed little fighting spirit and were slovenly shot makers.

I am glad that the glamour in lawn tennis fashions has somewhat died down. Before the war, the French advertised a new brassière called the "Front Populaire." Within recent years a group of American tennis females decided that, with a few inches of lace, they could start a "Second Front," an age-old distraction that has little in common with the lawns of Wimbledon. Fortunately frills will never compensate for shortage of skill.

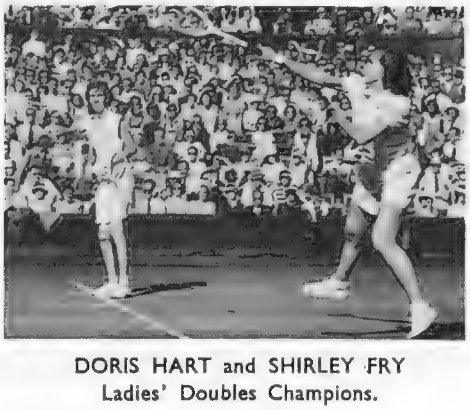
Thumb-nail impressions of the fortnight recall the boredom of Hoad and Rosewall, the effervescence of Huber, the exuberance of Billy Knight, the poker-faced attitude of Doris Hart, the courage of Drobny, the sartorial smartness of Patty, the flashing Latin smile of Mary Weiss, the rich sun-tan of the competitors, the arrogance of certain officials, the shortsightedness of linesmen that at times suggested mental astigmatism, the youthfulness of Borotra, the magic of the Bath buns, that only tempt at Wimbledon, the television commentaries that presumed the viewer could locate the ball when, invariably, it could not be seen. It was interesting to note the reactions of competitors to the Hart-Connolly final. Appreciation was unstinting.

I heard the arguments revived for an Open Wimbledon. No doubt it would stimulate popular interest, though there is no need to tempt larger crowds. Apart from that angle, I doubt very much whether the professionals themselves would welcome a test of skill with up-and-coming amateurs, as the game for them has become a bread-and-butter business, with staleness and increasing years as their greatest opponents. Box-office values might slump if youngsters like Hoad and Rosewall administered a lesson in skill and stamina. We tend to forget that apart from Sedgman, practically every amateur turned professional after his game had passed its peak.

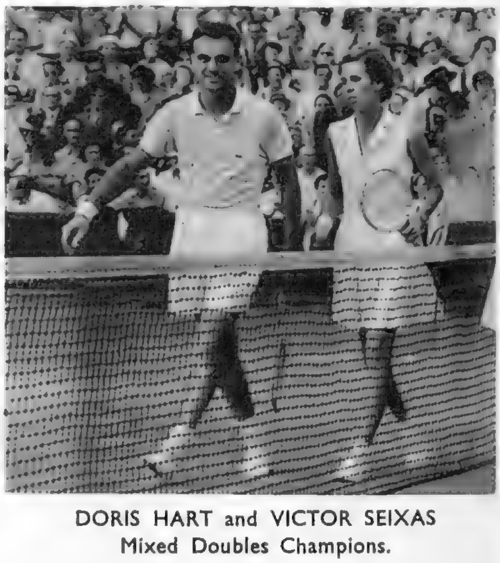
We shall not see, I fancy, a professionalised Wimbledon, for though we strike an occasional dull patch, like this year, worthy champions always emerge and the appeal of Wimbledon is as strong as ever. It is still the finest organised sporting event in the country.



L. A. HOAD and K. R. ROSEWALL
Men's Doubles Champions.



DORIS HART and SHIRLEY FRY
Ladies' Doubles Champions.



DORIS HART and VICTOR SEIXAS
Mixed Doubles Champions.

Arriving at Ludlow Castle : *l. to r.*, Mrs. Machin, wife of the Mayor of Ludlow ; Miss Lloyd, the Rev. T. Wood, Lord Saville, Mrs. T. Longworth, wife of the Bishop of Hereford ; Viscountess Boyne and Mrs. E. W. Sara.

The cast, *l. to r.* : Sabrina (Marion Milford), the Attendant Spirit (the producer, David Williams), Comus (John Westbrook), Lady Bridgewater (Myra Reeves), the Brothers (David Spenser and Peter Street), Lord Bridgewater (Kit Hall) and The Lady (Josee Richard).

REVIVAL OF MILTON'S "COMUS" AT LUDLOW CASTLE

"Comus and his Rabble Rout," with the old castle walls as a setting, simulating the scene of the first performance in 1634, since when *Comus* has not been performed in the castle until this year.

The first night's performance of Milton's *Comus* at Ludlow Castle on June 29th had a distinguished audience, which included members of Lord Ellesmere's family, who are descendants of the Earl of Bridgewater, for whom the play was originally performed to mark his arrival at Ludlow in 1634 as Lord President of the Council of Wales. The play was staged on that occasion in the castle's great hall on Michaelmas Night, and three of the Bridgewater children took part as the Lady and her two brothers. This year's production, which finished on July 4th, was held in the same setting but acted by a professional company. Profits from the week's performances went to the restoration fund of the Ludlow Parish Church, which is one of the largest in England, and has been linked historically with Ludlow Castle through the centuries.

On the extreme left of this picture is Viscount Bridgeman, Lord Lieutenant of Shropshire. In the row nearest the camera are the Earl and Countess of Harewood, Bishop E. W. Sara, Assistant Bishop of Hereford, Mrs. Sara, and the Earl and Countess of Powis. Behind Mrs. Sara are Lady Anne Holland-Martin, Colonel J. M. West, Deputy Mayor of Shrewsbury, and Mrs. West.

Guests watching the fireworks display in the grou[nds] the Staffordshire Yeomanry's Coron[ation]

Pipe Major Samuel Daly, of the Liverpool Scottish, gives Miss Sheila Griffiths some helpful instruction on the bagpipes.

Major A. F. Southall shows Miss Louise Davis the trumpets presented t[o] the Regiment in 1848 by Queen Victoria.

Dancing in a corner of the lovely old ballroom are Miss W. Ides and Lieut. D. Hollingsworth.

STAFFORDSHIRE YEOMANRY CORONATION BALL

of the Mount Hotel, Wolverhampton, where
Ball took place on July 3rd.

Lined up for the Gay Gordons : guests on the dance floor.

Happy group by a fine old fireplace : *l. to r.*, Mr. P. Poole and Mrs. Poole, Mrs. Lloyd Jones and the Rev. Lloyd Jones.

In another corner were Mr. James Wetenhall, Miss Valerie Simmons, Mr. John Cook and Miss Anne Condie.

A foursome enjoying the warm evening in the grounds : Mrs. M. Sankey, Mr. Robin Guy, Mrs. R. Pugh and Mr. Michael Sankey.

The Coronation Ball held in the beautifully-panelled ballroom of the Mount Hotel, Tettenhall Wood, on July 3rd, was a highly successful and very colourful occasion. Hosts were the Officers Commanding and Officers of The Staffordshire Yeomanry—Queen's Own Royal Regiment, and a distinguished guest list included officers of most of the Midland Yeomanry Regiments and many other Regular and Territorial regiments. Proudly displayed for the admiration of the guests were the trumpets presented to the Regiment in 1848 by Queen Victoria, who honoured the Regiment by giving them the right to call themselves The Queen's Own Royal Regiment.

Specially photographed for "THE SKETCH" by A. V. Swaebe.

The panel of judges in deep deliberation. *L. to r.:* Mrs. Ida Sawbridge, Professor A. M. Low, chairman of the Council of the B.A.R.C., Mrs. Norah Owen, "*The Sketch*" Fashion Editress, and Mr. and Mrs. Claude Wallis. The General Secretary, Mr. J. H. Morgan, watches fair play.

Professor A. M. Low gives Mrs. Ida Sawbridge, the dress designer, cogent and witty advice regarding the onerous duties of a judge.

Judging a midnight

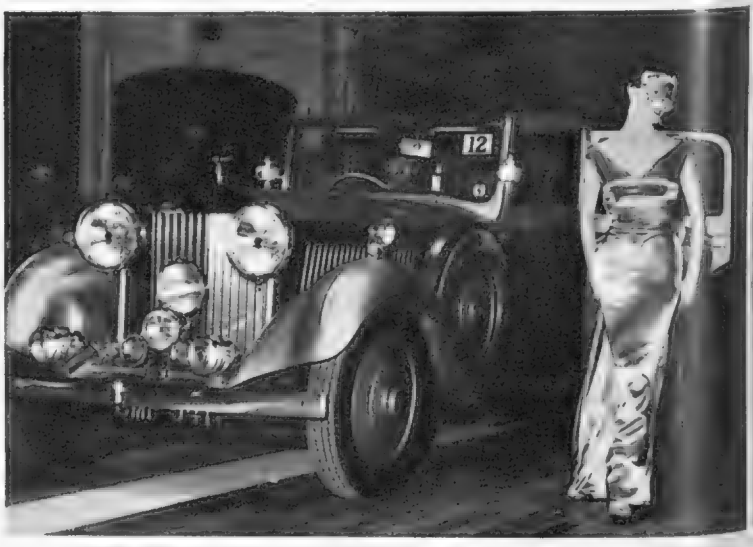
Concours d'Élégance

By "THE SKETCH" Fashion Editress

THE Concours d' Élégance, the climax of the British Automobile Racing Club's Annual Rally at Eastbourne, has become one of the outstanding events of the British motoring calendar, and rightly so. The combination of shining, streamlined cars and beautifully dressed women, under searching spotlights, is something not easily forgotten.

I foolishly thought, when I was asked to be a member of the panel of judges at this year's midnight event, that I should only have to judge the fashion angle, but I was wrong. I had to share with people who obviously knew a great deal about car "form" the highly technical task of giving marks for appearance and upkeep to superb cars, that looked as if they never dared to brave the hazards of the common highway. While the male members of the Board discussed the relative merits of the Bristol and the Healey, I could only think that they both looked equally delightful.

Awarded full marks for suitability of dress, is Policewoman Kathleen Spencer, who was in the Chief Constable of Eastbourne's Austin police car.



An air of mystery is introduced by the satin-clad lady in the mask, Miss Mary Gould in Mr. Jack Bond's 1934 Rolls-Royce Sedanca de Ville.

Mrs. Gatty Saunt, in brocade and a silver-blue mink stole, the winner of the Grand Prix d'Honneur, receives her bouquet from Professor Low.

The winning car, Mrs. Gatty Saunt's superb 1953 Rolls-Royce limousine with its blue and black coachwork by Hooper, proudly bears away its red rosette.

Mrs. David Frost, in a blue taffeta coat over a blue and white pleated silk dress, with the Bentley *Countryman* saloon, entered by Mr. Harold Radford.

On the fashion side, I was on firmer ground, and could even give the chairman, Professor Low, a few tips on materials and colours. He was a kindly judge, with a keen eye, and an interest in hats. Mr. Claude Wallis had very definite views: "Oh, no, I don't like that at all. No!" he muttered. The ladies of the panel were also firm, marking their cards with care. They might not be car specialists (although Mrs. Claude Wallis was as definite about colours and line in cars as her husband was about dresses), but they knew about clothes.

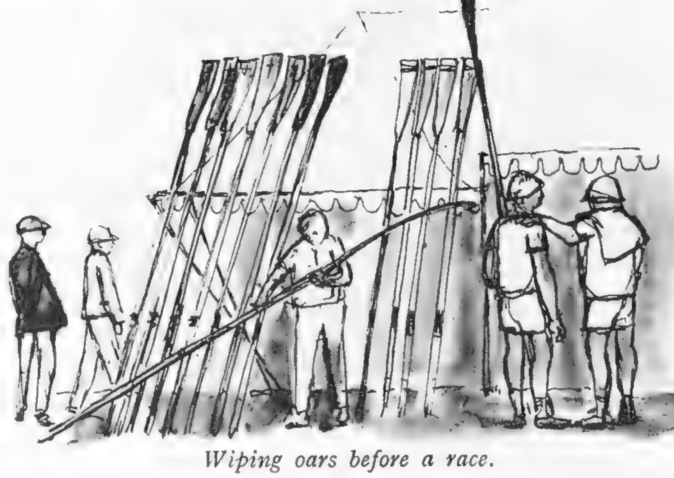
All were agreed that the simplest clothes, matching and in keeping with the type of car, were the winners. Outstanding were the white dress, stole and hat, touched with red, worn by Miss Lynette Neville, in Mr. Jack Bond's 1929 Mercédès Benz, and the dark grey silk dress, worn with a white hat, by Miss M. B. Morton in her grey and white 1952 Sunbeam-Talbot. The Grand Prix d'Honneur went to the most elegant competitor and car, Mrs. Gatty Saunt, in brocade and mink, in her glittering 1953 Rolls-Royce.

Specially photographed for "THE SKETCH" by John Wiggins.

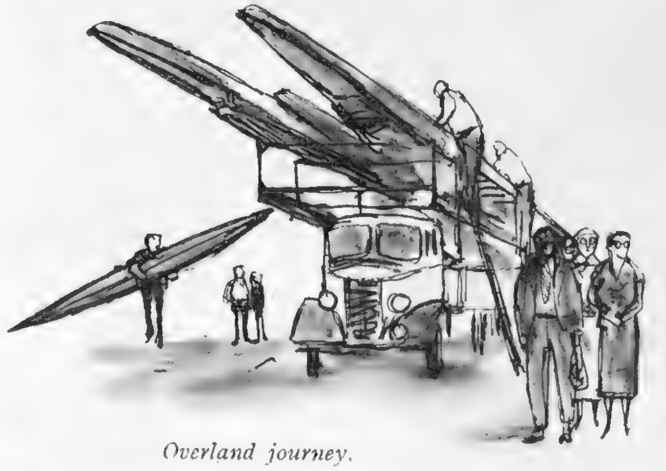
Mrs. Martin, Alderman E. C. Martin, J.P., Mayor of Eastbourne, host at the cocktail party preceding the Concours d'Elégance, and Major F. C. Bale.

Mrs. Wenda Pownall, in a green and white tweed suit, and in woolly cap, was a popular prize-winner in Major Pownall's 1929 green Bentley sports car.

Charming in grey, with a red scarf and a trim white cap, Miss Lyta Riley, the passenger in Mr. J. H. Lenanton's 1½-litre Riley saloon car.



Wiping oars before a race.

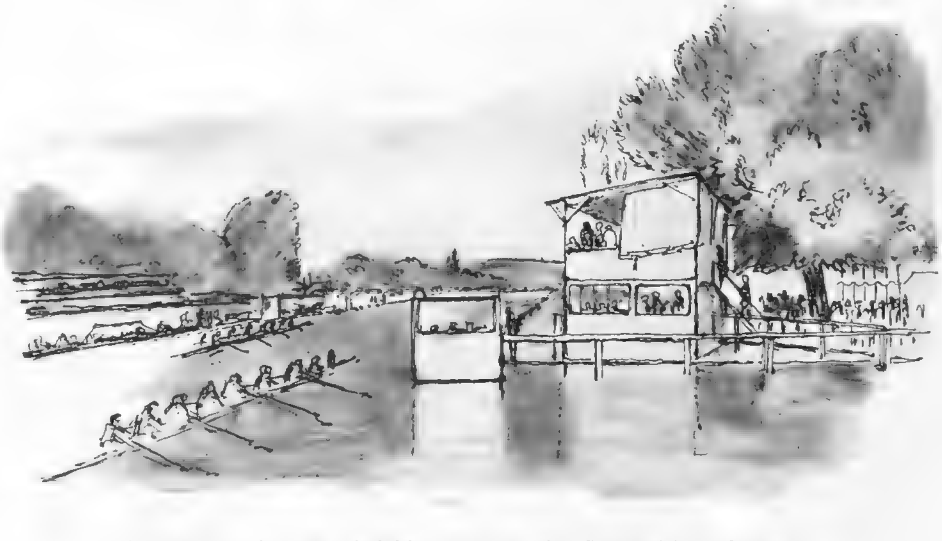


Overland journey.

Candid Commentary: by Credendus

Henley Regatta

Sketches by Susan Benson



A crew passing the finishing-post at the Stewards' enclosure.

Shop-window pot-hunting.

Refreshment in the shade.

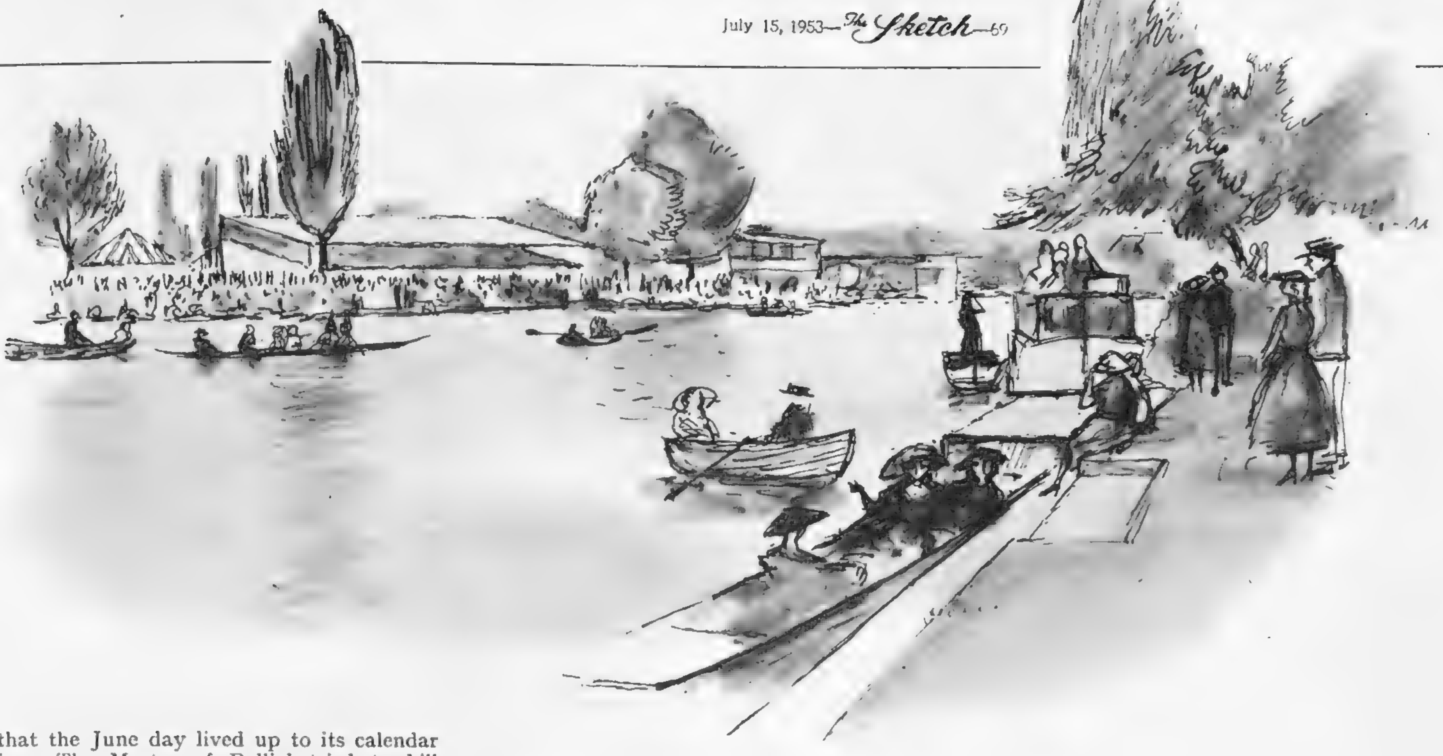
An exciting race—if you could see it!

Arriving at Phyllis Court for the Ball.

EVERY year the miracle happens. The waters of the Thames are changed into a leisured river carnival against an olive-green setting and Henley is transformed into a Parisian mirage. I sat on a canvas chair by the verdant lawns of Phyllis Court and absorbed the scene. It is possible to know nothing about rowing and enjoy every minute of this regatta. I am no admirer of punts. They are singularly unattractive. Their wooden nakedness lacks comfort, yet Henley contrives to vest them with magical qualities. Men from the City become extrovert and blossom forth in a welter of stripes and colours, each representing something to its owner and adding to the general kaleidoscopic blaze of light. The women were like waves of fluttering silk. Behind me came the strains of a military band. The tea-tables by the marquee were crowded with what looked like animated tinsel. In the distance the poplars swayed gently in mild surprise. The Old Blues were the link with reality. Remarkably like Rip Van Winkle, they had the disconcerting habit of peering upstream as if expecting something to happen. Every so often their hopes were realised as the straight line ruling the centre of the river assumed its intended significance. In the distance two eights hissed through the water in split-second co-ordination of effort. Immediately the entire assemblage gave tongue. It was a unique moment . . . a feminine version of Boat Race day. Instead of bustling steamers and chugging launches, there were hundreds of punts locked in a watery embrace. The charm of Paris and the warmth of Nice became stirred by the excitement of oarsmanship.

I thought how Henley came to acquire its specialised reputation, for during the Regency period it combined countrified dignity with regal levity. Frederick, Prince of Wales, had Park Place on the other side of the river, and entertained on a scale only equalled by the masques and balls at Phyllis Court, then jointly owned by Lord Villiers and Lord Grandison. I suppose geographical position added importance to the country town. Midway between Oxford and London, it was a natural half-way house whilst the horses were changed. Lawyer and cleric, scholar and squire met over a meal. The locals never thought of the stretch of river as having a social side. It was primarily a highway of commerce.

The Henley that I looked upon as the R.A.F. beat Imperial College in the Thames Cup final owes its existence to Oxford and Cambridge. I can give the exact time when the birth took place—7.56 p.m. on June 10th, 1829; and the occasion—both Universities sending a crew to the river. Reports



The landing-stage at Phyllis Court.

record that the June day lived up to its calendar reputation. The Master of Balliol tried to kill popular support by announcing a compulsory afternoon lecture on logic. The academic veto failed. By evening the roads were packed with dusty enthusiasts, contemporary chroniclers recording that more than 20,000 people framed the Henley reaches. The Oxford crew took their colours from Christ Church, then head of the river, and dressed in black straw hats, dark-blue striped jerseys, blue handkerchiefs and canvas trousers. Cambridge had pink sashes over their shirts. Oxford won easily in 14 minutes 30 seconds. A *London Society* writer described the scene : " Never shall I forget the shout that rose among the hills . . . it has never fallen to my lot to hear such a shout since." I only wish he could have heard the cheers that greeted *Leander* as their crew beat the French *Metropolitaine des Transports* to win the Grand Challenge Cup two years running.

When night fell the lawns of Phyllis Court were floodlit. Buildings and terraces gleamed white against the dark background. A girl, swaying her hips like a well-groomed odalisque, wandered into the gold pool with her partner. She looked *Rue de la Paix* against the *High* of her companion . . . . no doubt he would eventually discover that every fellow in his year had proposed to her. From the far side of the river came sounds of raucous voices, the wheezy music of merry-go-rounds, and the shrill shrieks of girls on a contraption that almost defied the laws of gravity. The trees were spectral yet the night was warm. Suddenly the sky lit up. The fireworks had begun, and with every flash I saw the crowd standing among the trees or by the water-edge.

Henley is a wonderful festival of Youth with Age joining in with appreciative understanding. If I have to memorise it, I shall murmur, as countless thousands have done before me . . . punts, strawberries and cream, a foam of lace and silk, pretty faces and blue eyes.

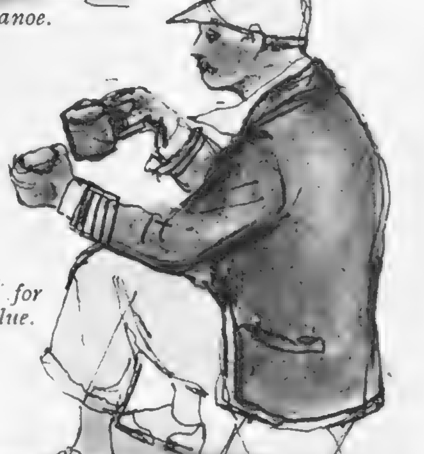
Sitting it out at Phyllis Court.

Complete with air-brake.

Invitation to the waltz.

Paddling his own canoe.

On the lawns at Phyllis Court.



" Lunch " for an old Blue.

The ground floor of the Stafford Cripps Building, Lanchester Hall, was transformed into a softly-lighted "night club" for the Presentation Ball held by the College of Aeronautics Students' Society on June 26th. Our picture shows members and guests in a corner of the decorated room, watching the dancing and listening to the Latin-American Rhumba Band.

Miss Mair Thomas and Mr. John Harrison contrived to find a potted palm and a comfortable seat all to themselves.

Professor A. D. Young and his partner were in a gay mood when the photographer snapped them dancing.

Mr. P. Dainty and Miss Leach "pose" at the foot of the stairs leading up to the lounge and bar on the next floor.

This attractive young lady, who "couldn't face the bright light," is Miss L. Hogan. With her is Mr. R. Wilson.

A happy threesome enjoying supper together in the marquee, *l. to r.*: Mr. S. Hinchcliffe, Lady Goddard and Sir Victor Goddard, Principal of the College of Aeronautics.

Netting makes a realistically "camouflaged" background for, *l. to r.*, Squadron-Leader and Mrs. Londeau, Mrs. Kennedy, Mrs. Murchie and Flight-Lieutenant Murchie.

A gay little group in t were, *l. to r.*: Lieutena S. Vallis, Miss R. Harve

COLLEGE OF AERONAUTICS PRESENTATION BALL

he entrance hall was decorated with a fountain and rockery, and in one corner vere, *l. to r.*: Mr. R. N. Ridgewell, Mr. R. N. Lord, Miss J. Street, Mrs. R. N. Ridgewell, Mrs. L. F. Wainwright, Mr. L. F. Wainwright and Dr. S. Kirkby.

This group also patronised the "night club," *l. to r.*: Flight-Lieutenant Allen, Mrs. Allen, Flight-Lieut. Styles, Mrs. Styles, Flight-Lieut. Fell, Mrs. Fell, Flight-Lieut. Dent, Mrs. Dent, Flight-Lieut. Cadman and Mrs. Cadman.

Among this group having supper together out-of-doors in the specially-built marquee were: Mrs. Kitchener, Mr. Kitchener, Mrs. S. Colbran, Mr. K. Slingsby-Fahn and Mr. J. Steen. Refreshments were excellent and thoroughly organised, there being a buffet and bar in the marquee, and bars in the "night club" and the upstairs lounge.

ner of the "night club" Preston, R.N., Miss Mr. J. T. D. Holt.

Lady Goddard (*left*), wife of the College's Principal, chats with Mrs. Stephens and her husband, Major Stephens of the U.S.A.A.F., and Major Pelham Reid.

Enjoying a joke over their supper together were Miss J. Goddard and Mr. Keen, who wore a rose in his lapel and sported a beautifully-embroidered brocade waistcoat.

The third Presentation Ball held by the Students' Society of the College of Aeronautics, which took place on June 26th, was a very gay affair, and the College's premises, Lanchester Hall, were transformed for the occasion. A lovely rockery containing a fountain was built in the entrance hall, and the ground floor became a ballroom and "night club." There was a lounge and bar upstairs, and a huge marquee out-of-doors contained the buffet and champagne bar. The 300 guests danced until 4 a.m. to the music of a ballroom orchestra and a Latin-American Rhumba Band.

JUNE 25th.—DEVONSHIRE CLUB CORONATION DINNER. Mr. R. G. Menzies, Prime Minister of Australia, who was guest of honour at this dinner, with Mr. J. Agerup (*centre*), chairman of the Committee, and Lord Bruce of Melbourne, President of the Devonshire Club (*right*).

JUNE 25th.—DEB. DANCE. It was such a hot night for the joint coming-out party given for Miss Sarah Milburn and Miss Belinda Stent that (*l. to r.*) Mr. Henry Villiers, Miss Penelope Chichester, Miss Charmaine Schroder and Mr. Ian Grant sat in the garden for a spell.

JULY 1st.—MORE DEBS. Holding tight to their decorative little posies are (*l. to r.*) Miss Virginia Murray, Miss Diane Du Boulay and Miss Susanna Boocock at their joint coming-out ball at the Hyde Park Hotel.

JULY 3rd.—ROYAL WINNER. Princess Margaret's Sealyham *Johnny*, shown by Sir Jocelyn Lucas, won a Challenge Cup at the show arranged by the Sealyham Terrier Breeders' Association in Windsor Home Park.

JULY 5th.—CRICKETING EARL MARSHAL. The Duke of Norfolk made one run in the match between his side and the Sussex County XI. in the grounds of Arundel Castle. Sussex won by 12 runs.

Notes and Pictures from

Our Social Diary

THE Cygnets' Ball at Claridge's on June 20th was as successful as ever; this is the annual dinner-dance given by Mrs. Rennie O'Mahony, head of the Queen's Gate finishing school, which miraculously turns sixth form "cygnets" into "swans." Older people there were Lord and Lady Rendlesham and Mr. and Mrs. David Gammans, present cygnets Miss Gillian Grant and Miss Benita Mosselmans helped to receive the guests, while Miss Anne Crowther and Miss Priscilla Elliot, both from Kenya, brought a very merry party, including Miss Lynne Morgan, Mr. Sandy Radcliffe, Captain Twiston-Davies, up from Aldershot, and Mr. Gordon Alcock, down from Cambridge.

The same night there was an amusing prolonged party near Maidenhead when people enjoyed a cocktail party given by Mr. and Mrs. Vandervell, then piled into cars for a Scavenger Hunt, danced as the guests of Mr. Michael Downs and his sister Pamela, and finally breakfasted at London Airport at 5 a.m. Among those not the least bit tired by this marathon were Mr. David Scott, Miss Belinda Harvey, Miss Gillian Willis, Mr. John Cuthbert, Miss Judith Violett, and Mr. and Mrs. Robin Borwick.

JUNE 23rd.—Night after night the deb. dances go on relentlessly, but nothing appears to shake the stamina of the stalwart young people. Mrs. Frederick Parsons and Lady Illingworth had over 300 guests at the dance they gave jointly at 44, Grosvenor Square for Miss Sarah Parsons and Miss Susan Wilberforce, Lady Illingworth's niece. Miss Catherine Lycett-Green, Miss Julia Royds, Mr. Edward Huls and Mr. Vere Harmsworth, Lord Rothermere's son, were among the many wandering about the little garden under blue-and-white-striped awnings.

JUNE 24th.—The lavish décor without which no good dance seems to be complete this season quite transformed the Hurlingham Club for the coming-out ball given by Lady Howard de Walden for her daughter, Miss Hazel Scott-Ellis, when *everybody* was there. Stuffed birds of paradise stared stonily from wickerwork cages in one room, the main ballroom was draped with grey silk and peach muslin, and another tented dance-floor had a green-and-white theme.

JUNE 25th.—Gipsy players, no longer a novelty but, nevertheless, still popular, hovered about the garden behind Hutchinson House at the coming-out dance for Miss Sarah Milburn and Miss Belinda Stent. It soon became so hot in the marble-columned ballroom that people drifted outside to join the gipsies. Seen dancing on the lawn were

JUNE 27th.—CONCERNING HORSES. During the British Horse Society's Two-Day Event at Cholmondeley Castle, Cheshire, Mrs. Harry Llewellyn fixed a rosette to the bridle of *St. Cwbi*, ridden by her husband, who tied for third place with Mr. Wilfred White in one competition.

JUNE 29th.—SOMETHING BORROWED. Wearing a veil lent by her mother-in-law and tiara lent by her aunt, Miss Jean Tollemache, daughter of Captain and Mrs. Humphrey Tollemache, leaves Holy Trinity, Brompton, with her bridegroom, Sir Francis Grant, of Monymusk.

JULY 5th.—CHELTENHAM COLLEGE CENTENARY. During the three-day centenary celebrations at Cheltenham Ladies' College, Lord Bessborough (*right*), President of the College Council, unveiled a portrait by Mr. A. R. Thompson of the retiring headmistress, Miss Margaret Popham (*left*). Over four thousand people attended the celebrations.

JULY 6th.—MOUNTED. Sir Rupert De la Bère revived an old custom when he went on horseback to a luncheon at Skinners. Lord Mayors of the City always used to ride about their business.

Lord Brecknock and Miss Elizabeth Fiennes; sitting out with Miss Susan Senior, keeping on the windward side of her pretty fan, were Mr. David Coleridge and Mr. Anthony Woodall.

Climbed a perilously steep stairway into a candlelit studio for the first anniversary party of the Chelsea Pottery Club. Mr. David Rawnsley, the founder, introduced us to his sister Mrs. Hanbury, over from America, clever "potters" June Hargreaves and Veronica Walker, and Mr. Pat Larking.

JUNE 26th.—"Monkeys" of many nationalities and their escorts queued to shake hands with the founder and principal, Miss Marion Ellison, and her partner, Miss Helen Joynson-Hicks, at the Monkey Club's Coronation Ball at the Hyde Park Hotel. We saw the Misses Denise Cullinan from South Africa, Virginia Chillipopoulos (Greece), Patricia Corniglion-Molinier (France), Janine Craig from the Bahamas, and Sarah Black upholding the honour of Great Britain.

JULY 1st.—The hall at Burlington House was a solid jam of people who, once they had battled their way to the top of the stairs, were all the more ready for delicious strawberries and cream at the Royal Academy Soirée. Sir Gerald Kelly was busy receiving the 1000 guests, among whom we saw Sir Harry Brittain with his faithful shooting-stick, beautiful Miss Alexia Stephanides, Lord Methuen, Lady Dalrymple-Champneys in apricot and green, and good-looking Lady Cunningham in delphinium blue, who came with her husband Sir Charles Cunningham, the banker.

We went on to the Georgian Group's Ball at the Fishmongers' Hall, where the Duchess of Kent arrived with Lord and Lady Salisbury—the latter is President of the Group, which aims at stimulating interest in Georgian architecture. Some of the braver members came in Georgian costume; Mr. Ian Graham decided that half-measures were more practical and wore a gay waistcoat and cravat with his evening dress. Others we saw were Lady Keeling, Sir David Eccles, Mr. Irvine Watson, Miss Ivry Guild, Miss Rosemary Phillips, a niece of Lord Cranworth, and many more.

JULY 2nd.—Mr. Timothy Whidborne lent his newly-bought and practically unfurnished Cheyne Walk house for a party given by Miss Juanita Forbes to show her friends the recently finished portrait of herself by Italian painter Pietro Annigoni. Admiring the picture we found Princess Marie Louise, Lady Thurso and Sir George and Lady Franckenstein. Mrs. Helga Mott watched a group of interested swans looking up from the river below, Sir Ronald Garret and Count Luis Artaza were others there.

JULY 3rd.—At Wimbledon, the Royal Box was crammed with celebrities. Watched by Princess Alexandra, the Duchess of Kent presented the cup to the winner Victor Seixas after the final of the Men's Singles; Countess Knuth, wife of the Danish Chargé d'Affaires, gave a bouquet to the temporarily vanquished Nielsen. Lady Leicester brought her daughter Lady Carey Coke, Mr. and Mrs. Attlee came early, so did Sir Thomas and Lady White. We saw the American Ambassador and Mrs. Aldrich, and also Lords Jowitt, Tedder, Templewood and Montgomery.

★ AT THE THEATRE ★

with J. C. TREWIN

The Moon is Blue

(Duke of York's)

THIS comedy has two principal attractions: the Empire State Building and Miss Diana Lynn. I have not previously met the Empire State—or, rather, its observation tower—in any comedy, and it is unlikely that it will rise again. But I hope that Miss Lynn will turn up again often. She is one of the most ingratiating visitors that New York has sent to us; and I wish her, with all my heart, a better play.

True, while she is on the stage she makes *The Moon is Blue* seem better than it is. It is an anecdote, by F. Hugh Herbert, about a girl called Patty, who has, as somebody observes to her, "a genius for saying the wrong thing at the wrong time." She is also, as somebody else says—or it may be the same speaker—a Nice Kid. We might put the comedy in the form of a game of consequences. A Nice Kid met a Young Architect on the observation tower of the Empire State Building. He said, "Will you come back to supper?" She said, "I don't mind if I do." The consequence was a comedy in three acts. And the world said: "How charming!" Alas, except during the first and last scenes—the prologue and epilogue on the Empire State—I cannot agree with the world. The play appears to me to lack invention and to harp interminably on a single joke. Where would it be without Miss Lynn? I hardly like to consider; but then, maybe, it is unreasonable to consider: Miss Lynn, happily, is with us. Her endearing quality is her wide-eyed candour. This is coupled with a passionate desire for information. She never stops asking questions. I was reminded of a line from *Little Dorrit*: "Look here. Upon my soul, you mustn't come into the place saying you want to know, you know." But little Patty will always want to know. And when she coos her questions as Miss Lynn does, what can anybody do about it but yield?

I yield to the actress then, but not to the play. After the first twenty minutes it never occurred to me to ask what A would do or what B might say next, for—quite clearly—no one would do anything that mattered. The dramatist cannot tell a story, and he has unwisely restricted his cast to four personages, one of whom has a bare moment or two on the stage (the only real bit of action in the piece, and, I must agree, a cheering one). During most of the second act I was surveying the furniture of the apartment on East 49th Street, and wondering why in the world the architect had built up his bookshelves so inaccessibly above the fireplace. What could be the titles of the books "skied" on the top shelf? And did the man use a ladder when he wanted to get them? And where did he keep the ladder? And . . . with a jerk, one returned to the business of the play after asking as many questions as Miss Lynn herself.

The play is, roughly, in the class of *The seven-year itch* (it is New York in the spring instead of summer, but the feeling is the same). Maybe it is unfortunate that one should have followed so hard upon the other. There is a mildly amusing scatter of lines. Robert Flemyng, as a member of the supper-party on East 49th Street, says, in effect, that if more fathers ripped more telephones out of more walls, more daughters would not get into trouble. Mr. Flemyng acts with a fluency matched by that of Biff McGuire as the young architect who will soon turn Patty O'Neill into Patty Graham. Harry Fine, who looks in at the end of Act Two, should also be called "Biff" for reasons that a visitor to the Duke of York's ought, I think, to discover for himself. ("Why not herself?" asks Miss Lynn. Oh, very well! . . .)

Love's Labour's Lost

(Open Air Theatre)

SO Regent's Park is again Navarre. It is not easy now to think of this butterfly-comedy of youth, once neglected on the stage, without recalling the revivals that, in our day, have made it famous: Tyrone Guthrie's at the Old Vic in 1936, when Ernest Milton was the "fantastical Spaniard," Armado, and Michael Redgrave reached London from Liverpool; the revival at Stratford, ten years later, that established Peter Brook as a producer (who has forgotten those Watteau figures and the looming last entry of Mercade?); and, in 1949, under Hugh Hunt, Miles Malleson's Nathaniel at the New Theatre: nineteen speeches only, but a piece of Shakespearean comedy unequalled in our day.

THE MOON IS BLUE.—L. to r., Donald (Biff McGuire) catches Patty (Diana Lynn) and David (Robert Flemyng) in a compromising situation. Says our critic in perhaps a slightly different context, "And when she coos her questions what can anybody do about it but yield?"

Naturally, then, an Open Air revival of the tangle of silken terms, taffeta phrases, has stern competition in the mind. Still, some of the magic holds. The verse of *Love's Labour* is spoken agreeably, in particular by Brendan Barry and Patricia Kneale as Berowne and Rosaline (both know how to use their voices), and by that promising actress, Jennifer Wilson, as the Princess of France. But I shall think of it in future for one of the experiences we can have only in Regent's Park: for the scene towards the evening's close when the people of Navarre weave across that great lawn in the glow of the floodlights; when the leaves are stirring softly in the night air; and Shakespeare's verse enchants a world suddenly quiet. The Open Air Theatre has served London for twenty-one years; its history is notable indeed. All must wish the gallant Robert Atkins good fortune and good weather in this present season when, alas, the venture is imperilled. Playgoers, rally!

The Bad Samaritan

(Criterion)

I HAVE always admired the enthusiasm of William Douglas Home. He never writes the same play twice, as some of our dramatists do, and he tackles any new subject with an excited eagerness. *The Bad Samaritan* has this quality; but Mr. Home wastes it, for once, on a plot that never persuades. We are in the household of a Dean in an English cathedral city. He has two strongly-contrasted sons. The play is about them and their various ardours and endurances; but, in retrospect, I can recall only the Dean himself, a very human figure acted with a beautiful precision by George Relph. (This actor's phrasing should be a lesson to any young player.) The Dean is drawn accurately and feelingly (and he has a pleasant dry humour). For me, Mr. Home, in spite of his eagerness, has not fully animated the sons. Happily, his gay sense of humour helps Michael Denison's part, and Mr. Denison can deal with it flexibly. But Ronald Lewis has no luck at all with the younger brother, the pietist. The rest of the cast can do little but stand by.

The play has thought and occasional power; and we note the moments when Mr. Home employs a form of heightened speech that could easily be mistaken for verse, and is indeed scannable at times. But the plot gets in the way: it is difficult to believe that anybody (the Dean excepted) could behave as the dramatist would have us believe; and, like Miss Lynn at the Duke of York's, we are usually asking the wrong questions at the wrong time.

Arms and the Man

(Arts Theatre Club)

NOW that Bernard Shaw is dead, we have the customary reaction. It is amusing when people say that *Arms and the Man* is thin and out of date, and that we have got past this type of satire, and that—in short—why bring up poor old Shaw? Who was he? How dare someone foist him on the present generation? Bless their simple hearts. They have to say that kind of thing, and I dare say it is good to get the nonsense out of their systems. The plain fact is that *Arms and the Man*, Shaw's anti-romantic comedy from 1894, is still witty, pungent and unexpected. Time has not tarnished Bluntschli's first scene with Raina and his famous description of the cavalry charge at Slivnitza. Alec Clunes acts with his quiet, unpressed charm; Gwen Cherrell hits off Raina sharply and amusingly; and Diane Cilento's Louka reminds us that there is thunder in the Balkan air. Robin Bailey is not the subtlest Sergius I have seen; but he strikes a good attitude, and I found myself, at the première, humming the song from any Ruritanian musical comedy:

> The men who stay behind—
> Pom-pom!—
> Can thank their lucky stars
> That our foemen first must find—
> Pom-pom!—
> The Galloping Green Hussars.

Arms and the Man is partnered, unexpectedly, by *The Bespoke Overcoat*, a serviceable little Jewish fantasy by Wolf Mankowitz that could be trimmed. The players (Alfie Bass, David Kossoff, Harold Kasket) act it with evident enjoyment and allow us to share their pleasure.

Photographed by Alan Vines.

" CURIOUSER and CURIOUSER "

Those words of Alice's, immortal like the rest of *Alice in Wonderland*, found an echo on July 9th, when the Festival Ballet's fantasia on Lewis Carroll's famous book had a tremendously successful première at the Royal Festival Hall. For it is curious indeed that no one has previously thought to create a ballet from this well-loved story, whose characters have lent themselves so perfectly to the ballet medium. Michael Charnley's choreography and Joseph Horovitz's music blend beautifully, and Kenneth Rowell's colourful costumes and décor are quite delightful. In the scene shown above, Alice (Belinda Wright) is in Court. On the left is the Cheshire Cat (Wolfgang Brunner), and on the "witness box" is the White Rabbit (John Gilpin). Lewis Carroll's King said, "Begin at the beginning and go on till you come to the end: then stop." The Festival Ballet's *Alice in Wonderland* does just that. It is one of the most "complete" of the new ballets to reach us in recent years.

Specially photographed for "THE SKETCH" by Eric Coop.

THE QUEEN'S CHAMPION TO MARRY

A recent picture of Captain John Dymoke, eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. Lionel Dymoke, of Heydour Priory, Grantham, and Miss Susan Fane, daughter of the late Lieutenant Francis Fane, R.N., and of Mrs. Francis Fane, of Fulbeck Manor, Grantham, who are to marry on September 4th. Captain Dymoke, who is the hereditary Queen's Champion, and carried the Union Standard in the Abbey at the head of the grand procession at the Coronation, serves with the Royal Lincolnshire Regiment. The title, which has been in the family since the fourteenth century, is inherited by each Lord of the Manor of Scrivelsby, in Lincolnshire.

Floodlit for the occasion, the house makes a fine background for this group on their way to the party on the island in the middle of the lake in the grounds of West Wycombe Park: *l. to r.*, Dr. Hugh Jones, the Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava, Sir John Dashwood, Mrs. Roy Harrod, Major Desmond Buchanan, Lady Dashwood and Professor Roy Harrod.

Groping their way through a tunnel under the temple on the island, Miss Barbara Berry as *Daphne* and Mr. Obby Waller as *Pan*, capture the spirit of the party.

" THE SKETCH " looks in on

DEVILS' REVELS at West Wycombe

The ornamental lake in the beautiful grounds of West Wycombe Park, home of Britain's premier Baronet, Sir John Dashwood, became the River Styx for a night when we were invited to share in some Satanic revels on June 27th. The occasion was a highly novel party thrown by Sir John's elder son, Francis, which was held in the temple on the island in the middle of the lake. Guests entered into the spirit of the party with great gusto. We had all been invited to appear garbed as inhabitants of the Underworld, or characters associated with the " Wicked Sir Francis "—the Dashwood ancestor who, 200 years ago, founded the notorious Hell-Fire Club which held some of its meetings on the island. Lights dotted about through the trees and glowing braziers at the lake's edge lent a welcoming glow to the proceedings, as punt-loads of laughing guests poured ashore. There were several beautiful *Persephones*, including the lovely young Lady Ronaldshay, numerous *Satans* and at least two *Farouks*. Earlier in the day, a cricket match was held, with the teams in eighteenth-century costume. When play was abandoned, the home team, captained by Mr. Francis Dashwood, was considered to be " slightly ahead " of the away team. The latter—the " Villagers of Chelsea," captained by Mr. David Price—arrived at West Wycombe by stage-coach, having been waylaid three times *en route* from Beaconsfield by Mr. Dick Smallwood, who made a very realistic highwayman.

Specially photographed for " THE SKETCH " by George Konig.

Devils' Revels (contd.)

Mr. John Julius Cooper, son of Viscount Norwich, as *Orpheus*, plays his lyre for his wife, who came as *Eurydice*, and Mr. David Price.

Miss Jean Dawnay, as *The Witch of Endor*, drops a little "poison" (it smelled strongly of Chanel No. 5!) in the glass of Mr. Michael Maclean.

Miss Jennifer Ramage as *A Village Wench deserted by the Wicked Sir Francis*, with Boston-American Mr. Roger Prouty, *A Member of the Divan Club.*

Miss Sara Long as *Hell Fire* and Mr. John Carruthers as *The Devil You Know which is better than the Devil You Don't Know!*

Captain George Leeds assures Miss Gloria Wesley-Clarry that his moustache is his own. *Behind:* Mrs. Birch-Reynardson with her husband.

Mr. Robin Howard, *A Member of the Hell Fire Club*, Miss Diana Howard as *Queen of the Night*, and Mr. John Dashwood as *A Divan Club Member.*

Professor Roy Harrod as an elegant *Mephistopheles*, the beautifully-costumed Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava as *The Celebrated Lady Sandwich*, Mr. Dick Smallwood in his highwayman's garb, and Sir John Dashwood as *Pluto's Stoker.*

Major Desmond Buchanan looks a little apprehensive as he prepares to punt Lady Dashwood and Mrs. Roy Harrod across to the island. Mr. John Dashwood, an expert punter himself, appears to be ready to leap to his assistance if required.

Some of the guests who had dined at West Wycombe Park preparing to leave for the party on the island, *l. to r.* : Mrs. and Mr. John Julius Cooper, Miss Zandra Hambro, Miss Jennifer Renwick, Mr. Morys Bruce, son of Lord Aberdare and son-in-law of Sir John Dashwood ; Professor Roy Harrod and Mrs. Harrod, as *A Witch* ; Sir John Dashwood, Mr. John Grigg, Major Desmond Buchanan, and Lady Dashwood as *The Wicked Lady*.

Mrs. Morys Bruce, Count Alessandro Valmarama, Miss Diana Metcalfe, Sir John Dashwood and Mrs. Lionel Brett who, with her long hair and ivy trailing over her white gown, made a most effective *Ophelia*.

Mr. John Grigg, as *Mephistopheles*, with Miss Jennifer Renwick, as *Temptation*, and Mr. Morys Bruce, who made a handsome eighteenth-century gallant, were waiting to be ferried across to the island.

The rains came, but the finale—a fireworks display timed for 1 a.m.—went according to schedule. Some hardy souls ventured out to watch, but most of the guests decided they could see well enough from the shelter of the temple.

Leonard Moss working on the cover of a ciborium, the design for which is seen propped on the wall in front of him.

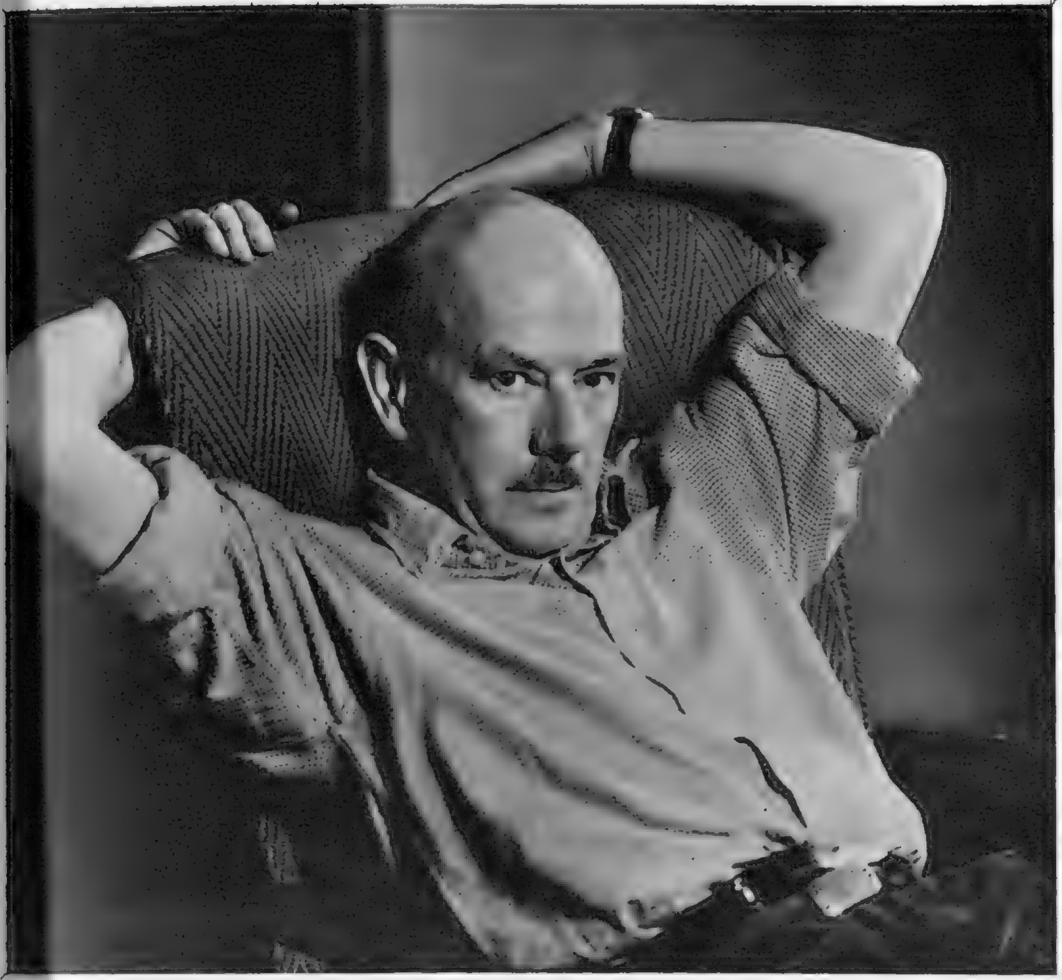
Leonard Moss mitres and fits foot-wire to the base of the ciborium.

Master Goldsmiths Leslie Durbin and his partner Leonard Moss have recently been holding an exhibition of their craft in the studio of St. Dunstans, Seymour Walk, S.W.10, the home of the late Oscar Ramsden, a master goldsmith whose reputation earned him the title "the modern Cellini." Both Mr. Durbin and Mr. Moss served their apprenticeships under Ramsden and the exhibition was designed to show what English craftsmanship can still accomplish. Mr. Durbin, it may be remembered, was awarded the M.V.O. for making the Stalingrad sword, and his most recent commission was the Processional Cross presented to Coventry Cathedral by the Dowager Marchioness of Reading. Both men, in the true tradition of craftsmen, design and work with their assistants at the bench.

Leslie Durbin stands beside the design which won him the Topham Grand National Trophy competition.

Leslie Durbin chases part of the centre-piece of one of six badges for the British Orthopædic Association.

MODERN CRAFTSMEN CARRY



Ernest Joyce, furniture maker, whose work supplemented that of the two goldsmiths shown on the opposite page.

The hands of Mr. Joyce inlaying a mother-of-pearl cockerel into leather.

One of the pillars for the Mace Stand for Southampton University being carved by Ernest Joyce.

Supplementing the exhibition of work by the goldsmiths on the opposite page was furniture made by another traditional craftsman, Ernest Joyce, who has become established in the field of domestic furniture and has executed many large pieces for both public and private bodies. His work includes the use of carving, marquetry, inlay and lacquer work, and he particularly attempts to find a modern interpretation of traditional forms. Like the other two, he also designs and works on the bench beside his assistants.

Specially photographed for "THE SKETCH" by Eric Coop.

Samples of the craft of Ernest Joyce—a chair made for the Brewers' Society and a writing desk.

ON THE OLD TRADITIONS

TALKING OF TELEVISION

By CYRIL BUTCHER

A Gay Romp to be Revived: "The Duenna"

WHEN the final curtain fell on *The Duenna*, on the occasion of its first performance on November 21st, 1775, at Covent Garden Theatre, Sheridan found that he had achieved one of the greatest successes of his somewhat hectic career. The public were entranced by this gay operetta, and it eventually eclipsed *The Beggar's Opera* in popularity—a circumstance which was by no means displeasing to Sheridan. That Dean of all dramatic critics, Hazlitt, was so enchanted that he hailed *The Duenna* as "the perfect work of art." Byron, at a later date, declared that it was "the greatest opera ever written."

If these ecstatic opinions had not been a shade prodigal, July 19th, 1953, would be quite a day for Lime Grove. For on that Sunday evening *The Duenna* is to be televised (repeat July 23rd) with the same cast who scored such a hit when it was produced at Bristol by the Old Vic Company. But, of course, it is the greatest moonshine to administer the accolade of perfection to this rumbustious romp, or even to call it an opera. It is no more than a hilariously unlikely fable, told with delightful wit—some of it pretty scurrilous, when aimed at Jewry and monasticism—and interrupted with a liberal sprinkling of lively ditties. But as such *The Duenna* has an undefinable charm, which leads one to forgive Milord Byron and Mr. Hazlitt for their extravagance in the use of the language of which they were masters. Indeed, it must remain one of the mysteries of show business that this piece has not been given more often. No great expense need be involved in the mounting, nor need the cast rise to any great heights of vocal accomplishment. The mere fact that the Bristol Old Vic Company have been able to take the thing in their stride and make a resounding success of it proves that.

For this production, by Lionel Harris, a new score has been written by Julian Slade. It does not aim to be great music, or even entirely original, as the *cognoscenti* among our readers will find, when they hear cross-references to various other composers, like Rossini and Sullivan. But that it is tuneful and easily sung there can be little doubt.

When discussing the forthcoming production with Mr. Harris he said: "I do hope people won't expect an authentic representation of a Restoration comedy. I've made no effort to be strictly in period, but only to provide a gay, romping entertainment."

In this light-hearted abandonment of presentational verisimilitude Mr. Harris has no better authority than Sheridan himself. The great dramatist set his scene for *The Duenna* in Seville, but nothing less Spanish in feeling could possibly be imagined. True, all the characters are called either "Don" or "Donna" and they address each other as "Signor"—but the atmosphere remains good old eighteenth-century England.

At this point I cannot resist quoting the altogether delicious jibe against his own country which Sheridan utters in the text:

DON JEROME: Psha! you talk like a blockhead! Nobility without an estate is as ridiculous as gold lace on a frieze coat.

DON FERDINAND: This language, sir, would better become a Dutch or English trader than a Spaniard.

DON JEROME: Yes; and those Dutch and English traders, as you call them, are the wiser people. Why, booby, in England they were formerly as nice, as to birth and family, as we are; but they have long discovered what a wonderful purifier gold is; and now, no one there regards pedigree in anything but a horse. . . .

The plot? It is a form of literary masochism to attempt to compress this extraordinary tale into a few words, but I will try. Apparently Don Jerome has a daughter, Donna Louisa, whom he is determined to marry off to a singularly repellent member of the Jewish faith called Isaac Mendoza (played in the original production by Mr. Quick, a Christian, while his friend Don Carlos was impersonated by Mr. Leoni, a Jewish tenor, with a shattering effect upon the ladies. As Mr. Leoni was highly orthodox, and as his presence was indispensable to the success of the piece, it was not played on Friday nights, when the Sabbath begins at sundown). Donna Louisa, however —and quite understandably—prefers the charms of her swain, Don Antonio, a handsome young man who was the subject of the quotation given above. This puts Don Jerome into a pretty rage, for he is one of those peppery old gentlemen—with a dormant heart of gold that only declares itself on the last page—without which no Restoration comedy is complete. So he locks his child up in her rooms, guarded only by the Duenna—also fitted with a heart of gold but provided with the plainest of all faces. Now the Duenna has a *penchant* for this unendearing Isaac Mendoza, believe it or not; so what could be more right and proper than that these two ladies exchange their identities, by the simple process of swapping clothes. Donna Louisa escapes from her parental home in the guise of the Duenna—dismissed for carrying letters from Don Antonio—and when the wretched Isaac arrives he is confronted by the Duenna.

Meanwhile Donna Louisa, making good her escape, has met her friend, Donna Clara, who has also run away from home for reasons which are in some way connected with an attempt of her stepmother to lock her away in a convent. Donna Louisa asks if she may impersonate her friend, and this naturally leads to further complications which eventually resolve themselves to everybody's satisfaction.

You see, I have failed in my attempt. But, perhaps, you are by now intrigued enough to look forward to this broadcast.

* * *

If it is done as well as it was in 1950, another evening to book in your television diary is July 17th, when there will be a repeat of Spike Hughes' *Frankie and Johnny*. This is a starkly simple story of Boy meets Girl; Boy double-crosses Girl; Girl shoots Boy.

CATEGORICALLY SPEAKING . . .

Good

Most of the efforts by the Television Outside Broadcasts units which in these months are hideously overworked. The first two Test Matches were given a coverage which can only be called a model for such events. I was particularly pleased at the occasional glimpses given of the spectators when some amusing incident gave an opportunity to relax from the serious business of watching cricket. Less happy were the pictures of the spectators at Wimbledon when viewers were treated to a featureless ant-hill of human visages. But the changing features of the actual matches were shown and described quite brilliantly. As a final dip into an excellent bran-tub, I choose the Bo'ness Speed Hill Climb, featuring an England *v.* Scotland match between those intrepid drivers of vicious little cars which are capable of negotiating "Big-Dipper-like" courses at frightening speeds.

Chu Chin Chow on Ice, which might seem an unlikely vehicle for a glacial entertainment, but which was a rattling good show—for those who like that sort of thing.

Indifferent

Why? The new panel show which replaces *What's My Line?* on Sunday nights. Too early to say whether it will replace the latter in the public's heart, but the corners of the critical mouth tended to turn upward.

Bad

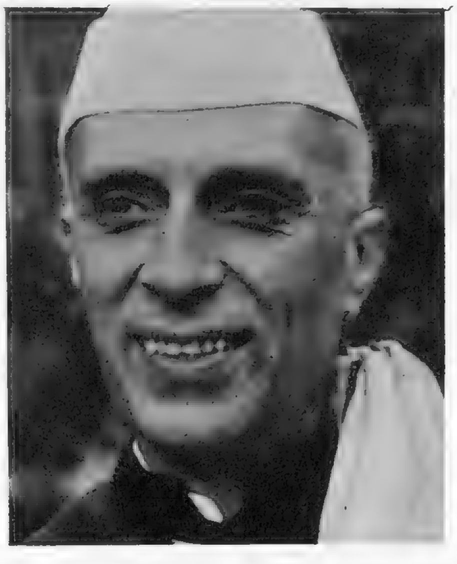
Reggie Little at Large. Have ignored this puerile offering so far, but there are limits.

People Who Matter

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
(Prime Minister of India)

IF an armistice in Korea ends three years' fighting there is one who will be thanked at the bar of history—the author of the peace plan, Jawaharlal Nehru, since 1947 Prime Minister, Foreign Minister and Minister for Scientific Research of 350,000,000 inhabitants of the Republic of India.

Coronation guests are going, but the memory of one remains in a thousand minds, for the audible silences, gestures with polished hands, terse phrases, monosyllabic answers, and the air of great strain. When Nehru enters a room there is consciousness about the world figure, but no response of enthusiasm by more ordinary mortals. Of medium height, slim, trim, stooping, and at sixty-three surprisingly white-haired, Nehru wears a Western-cut not Indian-style suit. He abjures popularity-seeking by meaningless smiles and hand-shakes to all and sundry. The deeply-lined forehead emphasises the well-set dark, far away eyes—turned to resurgent Asia, "the nationally conscious millions." Harrow, Trinity (Cambridge) and Inner Temple backgrounds show in British-type reticence, understatement, liking for British aristocratic friendships, British intellectuals.



JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

But the all-revealing voice does not fit, suggests divided internal loyalties, since it is metallic. Can we, should we, forget that he spent sixteen years in prisons in India for his battle for India's freedom from British rule, beginning in 1921, the last sentence being from August 1942 till June 15, 1945? Exactly a quarter of his life behind bars has taken the froth from all the successes, the honours, affection and love that queue now. But to the young he is generous—held up an assembly of luncheon guests, editors, to write a message in English for my daughter, copied his name again in Hindi and in Urdu for the autograph book.

Studying restless, unhappy Nehru at a dinner, stand-up fashion, as he accepted slices of chicken from our last Vicereine in India, Countess Mountbatten of Burma (he is the family's close friend), I wondered: Is he desperate over the shatteringly grave problems that face the world and Asia in particular? A few days ago, after luncheon amid the dark, depressing rich panelled walls in India House, I saw Nehru clutching tightly a handkerchief. I had asked what would India do if war broke out between East and West. Nehru shot back, "Benevolent neutrality."

But I fancy him as chairman for Churchill and Malenkov—for success.—G.B.

Drawn by Peter Arno.

Courtesy : Robert Hale.

★ AT THE CINEMA ★

with C. A. LEJEUNE

Malta Story

(Odeon, Leicester Square)

DURING the war the Crown Film Unit made a fine little documentary, with a symphonic score specially composed by Sir Arnold Bax, about the fighting record of the George Cross Island. Now, rather late in the day—but not too late, perhaps—comes a full-scale feature film, part fiction and part fact, showing the part Malta played as a strategic point in the Mediterranean, the ordeal it endured, and the re-kindled spirit with which it struck back.

Much of *Malta Story* is plainly derived from photographic records taken at the time; more from a proper admiration of the valour shown by the island people and the small British garrison at a key moment in the war. In everything concerned with fact, the film is splendid. It is only when it turns to fiction that the note begins to waver a little.

The personal story concerns a photographic reconnaissance pilot (Alec Guinness), in private life an archæologist with a dream of settling down to a quiet professorship at Cambridge, who gets grounded and involved in the defence of Malta on his way to Cairo, falls quietly in love with a Maltese girl (Muriel Pavlow), and as quietly dies in the course of routine duty before anyone can decide whether the marriage would be a good thing or not. Mr. Guinness's playing of this part is interesting and curiously reserved. He has little to give to gushing girls who go to the pictures for a bit of romance. He maintains, without faltering, the attitude of a faintly cynical scholar, who is more excited by megalithic remains than by the sight of a shapely leg. This is no hero of popular romance, but he *is* a character, and all of a piece.

The Story Of Three Loves *(Empire)*

"THE STORY OF THREE LOVES" is not one story, but three short pictures in one frame. There is a link between the subjects in that the central character in each case is a passenger in a liner sailing from Europe to America. The characters meet for a second, passing or observing one another on deck; but the encounter is transient; each story is separate.

In the first, James Mason, as a theatre impresario and choreographer, recalls how he found a mysterious, ethereal ballerina (Moira Shearer) dancing after a performance in an empty theatre; how he brought her back to his studio to create the rôle that had always evaded him; how, as he sketched her, she danced what proved to be her death-dance, and collapsed, having achieved an artist's dream of beauty.

In the second episode, which is sheer fantasy, a young French governess (Leslie Caron) thinks about the handsome stranger who came to her on her last night in Rome, reminding her in such a curious way of one of her young pupils. His appearance seems to her like magic; and, in fact, it is magic, brought about by an enterprising witch (Ethel Barrymore).

In the final episode, presumably the *pièce de résistance,* trapeze artist Kirk Douglas remembers how he saved an Italian waif (Pier Angeli) from suicide in the Seine, trained her to be his circus partner, and gradually discovered that he could no longer employ in death-defying stunts a girl who had become so precious to him. There is plenty of showmanship in this third story, with the aerialist slashing his scarlet way from high trapeze to high trapeze across the generous width of the new Empire screen; and little Pier Angeli, now Hollywood-groomed, as cool and composed as though she were stepping to the pillar-box to post a letter. But the strongest impression I brought away from *The Story of Three Loves* was not that of the young people, attractive as they are, but of an old person: Ethel Barrymore, venerable, preposterous and splendid, in her parody of a Personage who loves to hear her name pronounced—"Mrs. Hazel Pennicott! oh, it intoxicates me! I could hear it over and over again!"

MALTA STORY—Flight-Lieutenant Peter Ross (Alec Guinness), a peacetime archæologist, stationed at Malta, is taken by Maria (Muriel Pavlow), his Maltese fiancée, to look round the ruins of the ancient temple of Hagiar Kim.

The Square Ring

(Gaumont)

IT seems hardly credible that a British film should set out to show that boxing is an ugly, brutal and potentially murderous sport. But if that isn't the implication of Ealing's *The Square Ring,* then I can't imagine what the picture *is* up to.

Michael Relph's and Basil Dearden's production, from Robert Westerby's screen-play, is based on a stage play by the Australian writer Ralph W. Peterson which was first done at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith.

It deals with the events of a single night at a provincial boxing stadium. To the dressing-room, where Jack Warner presides as "handler," come a representative assortment of fighters. There is a punch-drunk veteran who doesn't realise he is losing his sight; a Welsh amateur facing his first professional contest; a handsome coxcomb who is known to sell his fights; a happy flyweight whom the crowds adore; a moronic bruiser addicted to science fiction of the more lurid sort; and, of course, an ex-champ (Robert Beatty) determined to make his come-back, who refuses to believe he can be too old at thirty.

The ex-champ's tragedy is meant to be the central theme of the film, but somehow it turns out less effective in the event than several of the incidents that surround it. Bill Owen, for instance, as the irrepressible flyweight, is my favourite boxing character, as well as the crowd's. The contests themselves are given plenty of space, but it's when the spotlight is turned on the types outside the ropes that *The Square Ring* really becomes a stinger.

The directors have had no mercy on the sort of men who exploit the fight game for their own ends, nor the sort of women who glut themselves on the sight of other people being bashed about. The shots of cynical promoter, managers and gamblers at the ringside are quite ruthless in their implied criticism; and most savage of all, perhaps, is the sketch of the handsome, calculating woman who is always ready to oblige, with her husband's permission, an up-and-coming boxer. I thought Kay Kendall made a striking thing of this unpleasant part, and Bernadette O'Farrall gets a surprising amount of sympathy out of the small sketch of a wife who has left her husband, although she loves him, because she loathes the ring and everything about it.

The Square Ring might have dispensed, to my taste, with some of its comic running gags, which seem out of place in this grimly realistic piece. But I may be prejudiced. I don't think boxing of this sort is funny at all, and I can't bring myself to agree with Synopsis when it states that "the film is one which can genuinely be described as comedy-drama."

Forever Female

(Carlton)

"MY dear, theatre people *do* behave like that," my neighbour told me when I ventured a mild expostulation over the goings-on in Hollywood's *Forever Female.* I respect his opinion, because he speaks from bitter personal experience. But I can't help feeling that a plot based on this sort of behaviour might be given a rest, after such long service.

It's the old, old story about the actress who won't grow up. (It may come as no surprise to find that the film has been adapted from a play by the author of *Peter Pan,* the boy who wouldn't grow up either.) Middle-aged Beatrice Page (Ginger Rogers) is the darling of Broadway, and supposed to be a person of charm, humour and business sense. But when a young man in whom she has taken a romantic interest (William Holden) writes a play with parts in it for a mother and daughter, she sees no reason in the world why she shouldn't play the daughter. A genuinely young girl (newcomer Pat Crowley), who is also interested in the author, sees no reason why *she* shouldn't play the daughter either. It takes about ninety minutes for the film to come round to the point at which somebody thinks of a brilliant way of employing both ladies. What *can* it be? Oh, you've guessed.

An experienced film-goer might have written the plot on the torn half of his ticket, but the Crowley girl does manage to infuse the film with a certain air of animation. The impression she leaves is ruthless, but then, the young are not infrequently ruthless. To present this girl in any other way would be both maudlin and improper. Paul Douglas, as the actress's ex-husband, contributes another of his set-pieces of middle-age which manage to be weighty without being ponderous, and Miss Rogers every now and then conjures up a ghost of the days when she played so magically with Fred Astaire.

OUR FASHION PORTFOLIO

by Norah Owen

SUMMER RAIN

In recent years rainwear has become sophisticated and suave. We can hardly believe the glamorous silk and satin coats we see are raincoats in disguise. But there are times, in the country, for race-meetings and on holiday, when we need the more conservative raincoat, clean-lined and light in weight. This true waterproof in grey, worn loose or belted, edged with ribbon-braid, leather-buttoned, is an ideal summer raincoat for casual wear. With its matching head-scarf, it costs £12 1s. 6d., from Wetherall.

Specially photographed for "THE SKETCH" by Studio Hanover.

The favourite classic twin-set, a short-sleeved sweater and golfer cardigan in pure Botany wool, by Lyle and Scott. In a range of nine shades, including white, clerical grey, sand-dune and scarlet. Worn with a slim tweed skirt in pastel shades, a Maxwelle Original. The untarnishable gilt jewellery is by de Farre.

A rugged-looking sports jacket of the kind so popular in America. By Pringle, thickly ribbed in pure Botany wool, it has an elasticised waistband and long hipline, with slit pockets. The smooth-fitting raglan sleeves and easy buttoning make it ideal for the active sportswoman to wear with a skirt or slacks.

A finely-knitted middy-line sweater for the young girl or the perfect figure. By Braemar, in navy blue, with red turn-back cuffs, square collar and hip cuff. Worn here with Gor-ray's checked tweed skirt with front pleats, it would also be ideal with slim-fitting jeans or slacks.

OUR FASHION PORTFOLIO (*continued*)

CALCULATED CASUALS

For casual wear there is nothing more calculated to give the easy look of perfection than the sweater and skirt or slacks. Scottish knitwear is still breaking sales records in the American stores, and most of our Coronation visitors have gleefully taken some of our sweaters away with them. For the home market the stream into the shops is still not as great as one could wish, and one still has to keep an eye on the knitwear counters, and " grab " when one sees what one wants. We show some of the range which will be available from time to time this autumn.

A classic twin-set, in pure Cashmere, by Ballantyne. The golfer cardigan in dark grey is worn over a short-sleeved sweater in paler grey, with a front woven in white and shades of grey. Worn with Gor-ray's finely-pleated straight, grey skirt, about 4 gns., from Palmer's, New Bond Street.

OUR FASHION PORTFOLIO (*continued*)

ELEGANT ECONOMY

The very simplicity of casual clothes necessitates impeccable tailoring, fabric and line, and although play-clothes are only for play-time, only the best is good enough. Jaeger are specialists in play-clothes, and we show their navy gaberdine, tapered slacks, with deep ankle-cuffs and flapped pockets (5½ gns.) worn with a pale-blue sleeveless sweater, with ribbed, wide, turtle-neck and deep matching belt (65s.). Both are from Jaeger, Regent Street.

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A BOWL OF CONTENTION

by A. D. Wintle

"AS you know, Vicar," said Sir Milner Gibbard, "there is only one thing I detest more than cruelty to animals, and that is people who talk evil of their fellow-creatures. In fact, if I can't say anything to a person's advantage, I 'd rather not speak at all."

"Precisely," murmured the Vicar. "It reminds me of . . ."

"Nevertheless," interrupted Sir Milner, "of all the scoundrels I 've ever met, commend me to old Jackson, the antique dealer."

"You don't mean Mr. Jackson our churchwarden!" said the Vicar in amazement. "I 've always regarded him as one of the steadiest . . ."

Sir Milner shrugged. "Oh, I 've nothing against him as a churchwarden," he said. "But as a dealer he 's the most cunning old rogue I know. I was told this story by an American visitor, Loomis Q. Something or other, whom I naturally recommended to go to see Jackson, as he said he was interested in antiques.

"So Loomis Q. went off to see Jackson. Between ourselves, Jackson knows about as much about antiques as I do about Sanskrit. He 's got a lot of old junk in his shop; half-a-dozen three-legged chairs which started life with four legs, a few old glass globes full of artificial flowers and moths, and a picture or two which might well be hung either way up. For the rest, his stock is made up of verdigrised brass and worm-eaten woodwork, all covered with cobwebs.

"As you can imagine, Loomis Q., who, after all, *is* an expert, couldn't find anything worth having in the place, and while he was still rummaging about, his attention was attracted by the entry of a cat.

"Now, of all the moth-eaten, lop-eared, mangy grimalkins, this cat was about the worst. With a raucous mew-like croak it advanced towards him. Loomis Q. retreated as far as the narrow space in the shop would allow. Jackson, on the other hand, greeted the cat with affection, and muttering some semi-animal endearment, retreated to the inner fastnesses and presently returned with a bowl of milk.

"Loomis Q. stood spellbound. Not that this was the first cat he 'd ever seen drinking milk, but because the bowl was a priceless Ming.

"Pretending to be interested in the cat, Loomis Q. bent down and examined the bowl more closely. The bowl was worth anything up to £500. Clearly Jackson had no idea of its value.

"'Say,' said Loomis Q., 'that 's a fine cat you 've got there.'

"Jackson smiled. 'Yes, Sir,' he replied. 'A faithful old friend.'

"Loomis Q. suppressed a shudder. 'Say,' he continued, 'if there 's one thing I 'd like to take back to the States with me it 's just such a honest-to-goodness old English tabby cat. I suppose you wouldn't sell?'

"Jackson shook his head decisively.

"'What! Sell our *Tibbles*!' he cried in horror. 'No. I couldn't. But if it 's a cat you want there 's Miss Prendergast . . .'

"'No, no,' said Loomis Q. 'What I want is a cat like that. In fact, I want *that* cat. I 'll give you twenty, I mean thirty pounds for it.'

"But Jackson shook his head. 'No, I 'm afraid not, Sir,' he replied. 'My wife would never forgive me if I did such a thing.'

"'Come, now,' said Loomis Q. 'That 's the cat I want, to take back to the States. Say forty pounds.'

"Jackson shook his head.

"'Fifty pounds!' said Loomis Q. rustling a sheaf of notes in his face.

"Jackson looked round furtively as if half expecting to find his wife listening-in at the door. 'All right, Sir. You can have it,' he muttered. 'We won't say a word about it. The cat usually goes out after its milk; you entice it into your car, and I 'll say it 's been run over.'

"The money was paid and the cat was enticed into the car.

"Then Loomis Q. returned. 'Well, I guess that 's a very satisfactory transaction. You can be easy in your mind that it 'll be treated like one of the family. By the way, what do you feed it on? Milk, I suppose.'

"'Yes, Sir,' said Jackson. '*Tibbles* is very fond of his bowl of milk. And scraps, of course.'

"'Tell you what,' said Loomis Q. 'What about letting me have the cat's own bowl to take with it. Sort of make the cat feel at home, wouldn't it?'

"Jackson shook his head decisively.

"'No, Sir. I 'm afraid not. The bowl is not for sale.'

"'But a valuable cat like that!' said Loomis Q. 'Seems a pity not to let it have its old bowl. I 'll tell you what I 'll do. I 'll give you another ten pounds to throw the bowl in with the cat.'

"But Jackson shook his head with finality.

"'No, Sir, quite impossible. That is the three hundredth cat I 've sold through that bowl.'"

"Three hundred cats!" gasped the Vicar. "What a very large congreg—I mean a large number of cats. Where on earth did he get them all from?"

"You remember years ago I rescued a cat and her kittens from my club in London. These are their descendants."

"Anyway," persisted the Vicar, "you can't say Jackson knows nothing about antiques. He knows a good Ming bowl when he sees one."

Sir Milner snorted. "That bowl belongs to me," he replied. "And I reckon it 's worth a steady thousand a year to each of us."

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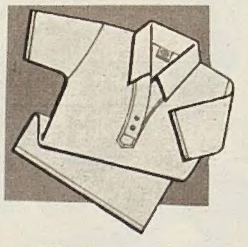

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